











# THE HOMILIST.

CONDUCTED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF THE "BIBLICAL LITURGY," "PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS," "GENIUS OF THE GOSPEL," "COMMENTARY ON ACTS OF THE APOSTLES," ETC.

VOL. II. EDITOR'S SERIES

SAN FRANCISCO

VOLUME XXVII. FROM COMMENCEMENT.

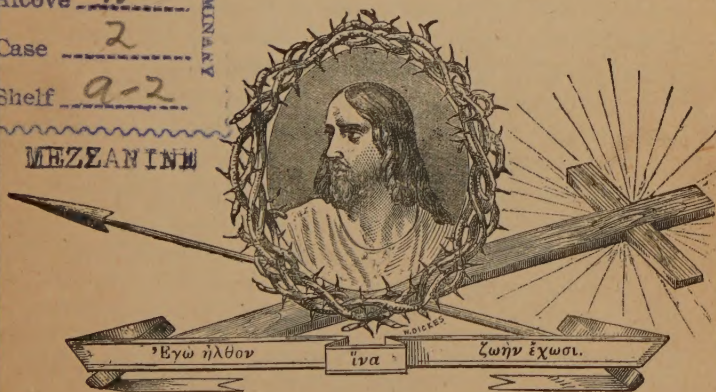
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"THE LETTER KILLETH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—*Paul.*

LONDON:

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.,

STATIONERS' HALL COURT;

DICKINSON & HIGHAM, FARRINGDON STREET;

A. G. DENNANT, 34 SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND.

GEO. ROBERTSON, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.

1870.

# THE HOLLIST

DAY TO TOMORROW

DUBLIN STEAM PRINTING COMPANY.

AND THE

## PREFACE.

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THIS Volume, the TWENTY-SEVENTH of the entire Work, is the *second* of the *New Series*—THE EDITOR'S SERIES. It is so called because the Editor has determined to bestow upon it special attention, and make it in every respect the best that has appeared. He is certain that no competent and impartial critic will compare these Volumes with any of the preceding ones without pronouncing a verdict for their superiority.\* If success is to be taken as a test of merit, these Volumes have the advantage, for their circulation has been unsurpassed.

Although upwards of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND VOLUMES have been sold, it will be gratifying for our friends to know that the demand is as great as ever.

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\* The following is a testimony from an able clergyman:—"With respect to the Editor's Series of the HOMILIST, any praise from me would be simply superfluous. I have, as you know, always held in the highest esteem the skill, originality, freshness, and genius with which it has been conducted, but I must confess that the last Series is in all respects incomparable."

"A London Vicar" says: "I can conscientiously say that I do not believe that the HOMILIST has ever been approached by any Pulpit Serial of the past or present, and that this First Volume of the Editor's Series is amongst the best of all the Volumes that have appeared."

Extract from *Dundee Daily Advertiser*.—"Without copying Robertson of Brighton, there is a prevailing spirit in this publication which perpetually reminds you of his sublime utterances. Dr. Thomas is a man of a spirit so profound and comprehensive, so Catholic and charitable, that the HOMILIST could not be other than that which it is. For the man always underlies the book which he writes. The HOMILIST is so rich in exquisite utterances that the attempt at quotation in this notice would be to commence illimitable enlargement. On the whole, we have two things to remark in this publication:—viz., first, that the HOMILIST is the *best* preacher's manual which we know; second, the last Volume is the *best* of the TWENTY-SIX, which it concludes, being the commencement of a New Series."



As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of the HOMILIST, and no new specific description is requisite, the former Preface may be again transcribed.

First : The book has *no finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly ; but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented “germs” which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly : The book has *no denominationalism*. It has no special reference to “*our* body” or to “*our* Church.” As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the HOMILIST to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man, as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

Thirdly : The book has *no polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute what is called the “orthodox creed”—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires ; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great Book of God ; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end*. Consequently, to the *heart and life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your system of divinity the author will not disparage ; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths ; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, “Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.”

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all Churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him ; to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the “last day” prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed ; and that the HOMILIST did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavours to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man !

DAVID THOMAS.

*Holly Bush, Loughborough Park,  
Brixton.*



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All the articles in this volume are written by the Editor, with the exception  
of those which have a signature attached.

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# A HOMILY

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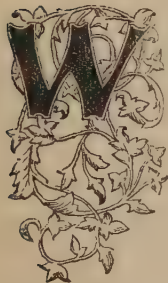
## *Soul Literature.*

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EMBLEMS OF SOUL WORK.—No. VIII.

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“Write them upon the table of thine heart.”—Prov. iii. 3.



WRITING is a very ancient art. Moses knew it. He wrote the Decalogue on the tables of stone. The patriarch of Uz, who probably lived before him, was acquainted with it too. Under his mountain of suffering and grief he exclaims, “O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever.”

The men of Ancient Egypt, Persia, and Rome were also versed in this recording art. The Alexandrian Library with its 100,000 volumes shows how extensively writing was practised in ancient times. The first form of writing, perhaps, was ideographic, in which pictures were drawn of the object intended to be conveyed. Abstract things were presented by those corporeal objects they resembled, as in the hieroglyphics of Egypt. The pictorial illustrations in modern literature are only an improvement on the method with which ideas were conveyed in the dawn of history and the

childhood of the race. What is called the phonetic form of writing (a form by which letters and syllables are made to represent sounds), and which now prevails throughout the civilised world, undoubtedly sprung from this. When and how our present alphabet was invented has been a matter of speculation from the earliest times. Most scholars have, however, agreed in making Phœnicia the mother of all our known alphabetical characters.

Now there is a writing older, more universal, and more important than this,—I mean the penmanship of soul. In this art every man is a busy writer. The soul registers every impression made on it—every passing thought, every wave of feeling that breaks on its shore, every volition, whether outwardly expressed or hidden in the solitude of its own chamber. It transcribes all that comes within its horizon, it leaves nothing unrecorded. In comparing soul writing with that of the pen two things are observable, *correspondence* and *dissimilarity*.

I. CORRESPONDENCE. Both imply *readers*. It is true that sometimes men take the pen and note down things intended for no eye but their own. They register their private transactions, and their secret devotions, not for others but for themselves. But generally men write to be read and the writings of some men are read by thousands the world over, and that by many generations. Soul writing has its readers. Paul regarded the Corinthian Christians as “the epistles of Christ,” “Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God: not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” Every man is a letter that has many readers, and often many students. What we write in the soul is seen through our words, habits, spirits, bearing, as through a window. The members of our circle read us, angels read us, and the Great God “understands our thoughts afar off.” Accuracy in both cases requires *training*. In teaching our children the art of caligraphy we furnish them with model copies, which they

are to imitate with strictest attention. The art of writing seems to me so wonderful that I doubt whether any man could have discovered it by his own unaided efforts. I am inclined to ascribe it to the Great Teacher of all that is good and useful. Nor will the soul ever write well without instruction, and that of the highest kind. It is true that it will register everything that comes under its consciousness by the necessity of its own nature; but such a record will be miserably vile and unfit to read, unless it has been inspired and directed by the Spirit of truth and holiness. God Himself must give the model copy for good soul writing. This He has promised to do, "I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their heart." What is that law? It is the law of purity and truth, the law of holy love to God and man. The soul must write after this copy if it would write well—all its facts must be registered, all its arguments conducted, all its purposes formed in the spirit of this model. Both are either *useful* or *injurious*. The writings of some men have been a great curse, they have rolled as rivers of poison through the heart of ages. Much of the modern press of England is, I fear, impregnating the mental atmosphere of our age with foul diseases that emmasculate intellect, and paralyse the moral powers of mankind. But whilst art writing has often been and still is very injurious, it has often been and still is very beneficial. We thank God for books. They make us acquainted with the distant and the dead. On the streams of literature we see mirrored the institutions, philosophies, and habits of men who have been carrying on the affairs of the world from the beginning. Judea, Greece, and Rome, the old teachers of the world are brought down to us in books and made to live their life and play their part again. Christianity has come down to us in writing. The communications of Heaven to the Fathers and Prophets, the biography of Jesus, and the thoughts of the Apostles, these soul rennovating and soul saving forces would never have reached this age had it not been for letters.

Soul writing is also either injurious or useful. The record of a bad life is bad in its influence. Each human life, however humble, is a fountain whence streams will flow down the centuries. If the life is corrupt the streams will be morally pestilential, if holy the reverse. What an influence the life of Christ had for good. He wrote no book, yet his life was a volume full of the cleansing, recreative, and Divine—it is a fountain of the highest life to the world.

In comparing soul writing with art writing the other thing observable is,

II. DISSIMILARITY. Soul writing is the more *universal*. The number of men who are instructed in the art of writing are few compared with the population. To the disgrace of the rulers of England, be it said, there are thousands in this country who are yet incapable of reading or penmanship. But all souls are writing. The soul of the wild man in the forest, as well as that of the most enlightened sage, the soul of the child as well as of the man, is constantly registering. Soul writing is the more *voluminous*. Amongst our English authors there are some who have written in great abundance; many large volumes have gone forth from their brain; but the works of the most prolific writer constitute but a fraction compared with that which each man's soul has written. What a wonderful book is memory! Dr. Johnson is said to have forgot nothing that he had ever seen, heard, or read. Grotius and Pascal allowed nothing that came under their notice to be lost. Ben Jonson tells us that he could repeat all he had written, and whole books that he had read. Themistocles could call by their names the 20,000 citizens of Athens. In one man's life there is more written down than could be contained in a thousand volumes. Count all the impressions made, all the thoughts conceived, all the emotions felt, all the volitions past during one day. Multiply them by all the days of a man's life; how enormous would be the sum!—no figures could represent them. Soul writing is the more *permanent*. Art writes on paper, but



paper moulders—on vellum, but vellum decays—on metals and marble, but time erases every character. The names of men once engraved on earth's most enduring substances, have long since been wiped away by the hand of time. But what is written on the soul can never be erased; the soul is an imperishable tablet, a tablet over which time has no power, and which the conflagration of worlds will leave unscathed and untouched.\*

Soul-writing is the more *useful to Christianity*. On this let us specially dwell for a moment. All writers in relation to Christianity may be divided into three classes. Those who ignore it altogether—this perhaps is the largest class. It is to us a wonderful mental phenomenon, that men born here in England, educated in what is called *Christian* colleges and universities, should be able to write large volumes, and never make allusion to that religion which has confessedly made their country what she is. The literature of Greece and Rome is full of religion. The divinities appear and speak through all. The songs of poets, the narrations of annalists, the speeches of orators, and the philosophies of sages, are full of the gods. This is natural. The chief thing *in* the mind being the religious, and the chief thing *out* of it the god, it is only natural to expect that the chief feature in its productions should be religion. The second class are those who introduce Christianity into their writings for wrong purposes. Some to undermine its authority, strip it of its supernaturalness, and explain away its divinity; others to aggrandize themselves, to adorn their tales, embellish their productions, and sell their books. The other class are those who introduce Christianity into their writings for a good purpose, but in a bad way. Some in the way of whining sentimentality, others in the way of bitter polemics, and others in the way of cut-and-dried orthodoxy. Some of the most *Anti-Christian* books are written in the name of Christianity. Their narrow

\* See further illustrations of this on another page, under the title—  
“Strange Psychological Facts.”

spirit, their vapid conceptions, their childish reasonings, their simpering, mawkish sentiment, and withal, their arrogant assumptions are miserable libels on the system of Jesus. They have done, I trow, more to promote infidelity than books constructed for infidel purposes. Give me the book which makes no mention of Christianity, or the book that introduces it professedly to degrade it, rather than the book which seeks to promote it, but contains nothing of its grandeur of conception, freedom of spirit, and nobleness of soul. But whatever may be the amount of literature that does real service to humanity, its service is in no way so effective as when it is written in the soul.

First: *Truth written by the soul in the life is more legible than truth written by the pen.* There are some whose caligraphy is difficult to decipher, and some whose compositions are difficult to interpret; their thoughts are misty, their style involved, their sentences lie under a haze. But what the soul has written, the life reveals so clearly that a child can make it out. It is possible for a man occasionally to put on a mask, and to misrepresent his true spirit and inner life. And this, alas! he often does; but when he is natural, and he is so during the average of his life, his very looks and movements reveal him. It is said that children are physiognomists. So they are. They read the soul in looks. Many noble works have been written in order to expound the principles and spirit of true religion; but the most lucid of them is obscure compared with the exposition that is furnished by the life of a genuinely godly man. The best commentary on Christianity, the most easily read and generally appreciated, is the life of its disciples.

Secondly: *Truth written by the soul in the life is more convincing than truth written by the pen.*—Many books have been written on the evidences of Christianity, and sometimes by the greatest scholars and ablest men. Do I under-rate their productions? By no means. Works such as those

of Paley, Lardner, and Butler are capable of demolishing the strongest theories of scepticism, either ancient or modern. But one life permeated and fashioned by the Christian spirit, has a far more convincing power than any or all of these magnificent productions. The man that Christianity has transformed from the sensual, the selfish, and the corrupt, into the spiritual, the benevolent, and the holy, furnishes an argument for Christianity which baffles all controversy, and penetrates the heart.

Thirdly : *Truth written by the soul in the life is more persuasive than truth written by the pen.* There are many books which are persuasives to piety. Some are called so, and some have undoubted power. But the most powerfully persuasive books are weak compared with the winning power of a true godly life. There is a magnetism about Gospel truth, when embodied in a real life, which you seek for in vain in any written work. We have Christianity preached. Ten thousand pulpits in England are engaged every Sunday in unfolding the truths and enforcing the lessons of Christianity. We have Christianity written. Books of every size, written by every class of mind and in every style, flow from the press every day in an ever-widening and deepening channel. What we want now is Christianity in life, Christianity incarnated, worked out in the daily life of all who profess to be its disciples. It is not until we have this that the world will ever be converted.

CONCLUSION — Consider. First, *That life is a book* ; a book which thou art writing every day. An old author has said that a man is a book. “ His birth is the title page ; his baptism the epistle dedicated ; his groans and crying the epistle to the reader ; his infancy and childhood the argument or contents of the whole ensuing treatises ; his life and actions are the subject ; his sins and errors the faults escaped ; his repentance the correction. As for the volumes, some are in folio, some in quarto, some in octavo, &c. Some are fairer bound, some plainer ; some have piety

and godliness for their subject ; others, and they too many, are mere romances, pamphlets of wantonness and folly ; but in the last page of every one there stands a word, which is *Finis*, and this is the last word in every book. Such is the life of man, some longer, some shorter ; some stronger, some weaker ; some fairer, some coarser ; some holy, some profane. But death comes in, like *finis*, at the last, and closes up all ; for that is the end of all." Ah ! but death is not the *finis*,—the soul will go on writing for ever. Consider—

Secondly : *The book of life should be a Christian book.* Every fact should be registered in a Christian spirit, every emotion saturated with the Christian sentiment, every thought controlled by the Christian doctrine, every volition ruled by the Christian law. The word should not only dwell in us, but should be made flesh by us. Consider—

Thirdly : *This book of life will soon have to be examined.* In that great day when the hearts of all men shall be revealed this shall be one of the books that shall be opened before the Judge. Its countless pages shall be turned over and exposed to the blaze of the last day. Every chapter, every verse, every sentence will be examined. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works."

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"Again, it may be that there is more of truth than one suspects in the assertion which I met with in a work of M. de Quincey's, that forgetting—absolute forgetting—is a thing not possible to the human mind. Some evidence of this may be derived from the fact of long missed incidents and states of feeling suddenly being reproduced, and without any perceptible train of association. Were this to be so, the idea is very awful ; and it has been suggested by a great thinker that merely perfect memory of everything may constitute the great book which shall be opened in the last day, on which man has been distinctly told that the secrets of all hearts shall be made known : 'for all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.'—Heb. iv. 13. An old man, in describing the sensations he felt at drowning, when he was with difficulty recovered, said he had the ringing of bells in his ears, which increased as consciousness was becoming less : and he felt as if 'all the bells of heaven were ringing him into Paradise !—the most soothing sensation.'"—TIMBS.

# Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this **TEHILIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The **ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

*Subject: THE SOUL'S CRY AND THE TRUE RESPONSE.*

*(Continued from page 334, Vol. I., Editor's Series.)*

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?  
Or who shall stand in His holy place?  
He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.  
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity,  
Nor sworn deceitfully.  
He shall receive the blessing from the Lord,  
And righteousness from the God of his salvation;  
This is the generation of them that seek Him,  
That seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah."—Ps. xxiv. 3–6.

**HISTORY.**—The history of this Psalm was given in our last Homiletic sketch, and as the verses above are very similar not only in meaning but expression to Psalm xv, we must direct the attention of our readers to our remarks on that priceless portion of Holy Writ.

**ANNOTATIONS.**—Annotations on the first two verses of this Psalm were given in our last sketch.

**Ver. 3.**—"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place." The "hill of the Lord" was Mount Zion, the Acropolis of the holy city. In the tent which David had prepared for it on this mount the ark was to be deposited, and henceforth the spot would be hallowed as the earthly dwelling-place of Jehovah.

**Ver. 4.**—"He that hath clean hands." Margin "the clean of hands." The expression means a blameless external conduct. "And a pure heart."



A mere blameless external life must be connected with and flow out of purity of soul. Spiritual holiness. In the parallel passage, Psalm xv. 2, the answer is, "he that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness." The words are different, but the meaning is substantially the same, "*Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity.*" Some render it "And lifteth not his mind to vanity." Some think there is a reference here to idolatry, where the soul is lifted in worship to an idol, which Scripture designates "a vain thing," 1 Cor. viii. 6; Isa. xli. 24. But moral evil in all its forms is *vanity*, an unreality and blasphemous falsehood in the universe. In the vulgate it is rendered, "He that hath not received his soul in vain." What millions have received their souls in vain! "*Nor sworn deceitfully.*" Sworn to falsehood; i. e., made a false oath, sworn to deceit with a fraudulent design. (*Alexander.*) In the parallel passage, Psalm xv. 2, the statement is, he that speaketh the truth in his heart.

Ver. 5.—"He shall receive the blessing from the Lord." Literally, he shall bear away a blessing from Jehovah. "*And righteousness from the God of his salvation.*" That is, God will make him righteous and recognize him as righteous.

Ver. 6.—"*This is the generation of them that seek him.*" This means, perhaps, this is the description of the race of men. "*That seek thy face, O Jacob.*" Margin, "O God of Jacob." De Wette understands this as meaning that they would seek the face of God among His people; or that they who belonged to the race of Jacob, and who were sincere, thus sought the face of Jacob. Others regard the passage as meaning, "This is the generation of them that seek him, the true Jacob, O Lord." "By the demonstrative 'pronoun' *this*," says Calvin, "the Psalmist erases from the catalogue of the servants of God all counterfeit Israelites, who, trusting only to their circumcision and the sacrifice of beasts, have no concern about offering themselves to God; and yet at the same time, they rashly thrust themselves into the Church."

ARGUMENT.—We have already said that the whole Psalm contains three subjects. (1.) God's mundane property and man's moral obligation. (2.) The soul's cry and the true response. (3.) An urgent demand and an earnest enquiry. The second is the subject of these verses.

HOMILETICS: The homiletic remarks which we have made on the xv. Psalm will render it unnecessary to give more than a very brief sketch of the truths suggested by this passage.\* Notice then—

I. THE SOUL'S CRY. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" The real meaning of this question—its *spirit*—is,

\* See HOMILIST, fourth series, vol. iii., p. 204. We should recommend our readers to peruse our remarks on the xv. Psalm in connection with our present observations on this.



how is fellowship with the great God to be attained? This state of fellowship with Him is the great want of human souls. The language suggests three thoughts concerning this state. It is—

First: *A very elevated state.* “The hill.” Communion with the Great Father is the *highest* state of moral being. It towers as the Andes above the level of man’s ordinary life, it is a high hill to be climbed, a mountain whose peak is aloft in the sun. Up there how clear is the moral sky? all the clouds roll beneath the feet. How calm is the atmosphere; the roar of the winds and the crash of the thunders are lost in the depths below. How vast, how sunny, how enchanting the prospects unfolded from that elevation. The soul in communion with God is high up above the mists, impurities, and tumults of worldly life. It is—

Secondly: *A very holy state.* It is a “holy place.” The place where “the ark,” the symbol of the Divine Presence was deposited. So holy was it that the High Priest only entered it once every year, and then never without blood, but the gleaming Shekinah was only a symbol of the essential purity of God. “He is Light, in Him there is no darkness at all.” “He charges the angels with folly and declares the heavens unclean in His sight.” Communion with him is the holiest condition of souls. “Without holiness no man can see the Lord.” It is—

Thirdly: *A very desirable state.* “Who shall ascend?” All should ascend, but what is the qualification for ascending? Of all the desirable things in life there is nothing so desirable for man as fellowship with God. For this his nature craves, there is no satisfaction without it. For this Christ became mediator. The grand purpose of His interposition was to bring man into fellowship with his Maker. Would that the souls of men would climb this hill. Though high and difficult its foothold is strong, its heights can be scaled. Alas that so few are making the attempt. Alas that the millions instead of climbing upward are sliding down the gloomy slopes of corruption and ruin.

II. THE TRUE RESPONSE. The answer that is here given indicates two things.

First: *The way of reaching* this state. What is the way?

“He that hath clean hands and a pure heart: who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” This means (1) *moral cleanness*, cleanness in hands and heart, “Having conduct void of offence towards God and man.” A man may be *clean-handed* so far as the eyes of men are concerned and black-hearted to the eyes of God. The clean hands must be hands washed by the pure sentiments, motives, and aims of a holy heart. This means (2) *moral reality*—freedom from all vanity and deceit, all untruthfulness in spirit, all unveracity in speech. These two things then, moral cleanness and moral reality are the qualifications for ascending this holy hill. “It is not,” says Luther, “he who sings so well or so many Psalms, nor he who fasts or watches so many days, nor he who divides his own among the poor, nor he who preaches to others, nor he who lives quietly, kindly, and friendly: nor in fine is it he who knows all sciences and languages, nor he who works all virtuous and all good works that ever any man spoke or read of, but it is he alone, who is pure within and without.”

Secondly: The *blessedness of reaching* this state. “He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.” “*The blessing.*” What blessing? The blessing that includes all others—loving fellowship with Himself, and the possession of conscious and divinely recognized rectitude of character. The men who reach this goal are a distinguished race. “This is the generation of them that seek Him.” They are a race distinguished from all other men. *This* is the generation, no generation like it. Merciful Heaven make us all members of this glorious race!



“When one that holds communion with the skies,  
Has filled his urn where those pure waters rise,  
And once more mingles with us meaner things,  
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings:  
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,  
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.”—COWPER.

# A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19—21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

## *Subject: IDEAL MATRIMONY.*

*(Continued from page 338, Vol. I., Editor's Series.)*

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church," &c.—Ephes. v. 22—33.

**H**AVING offered exegetical remarks on every verse in this remarkable passage, we proceed to notice the grand subject which it contains—viz., ideal matrimony, or Paul's idea of the marriage state. It comes not within the limits of our purpose or space to enter into a full discussion of the grand subject of human marriage. Our readers will find a very learned and exhaustive treatment of this question in Dr. William Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible."\* Our remarks must be confined entirely to those phases of the subject which the passage under review suggests. On all hands it is admitted that marriage—that is, the union for life of one man to one woman—is a divine ordination. Some philosophers see the principle of matrimony

\* See also our Homiletical Commentary on Matthew, page 484.

running through all nature, not only in the sexual distinction of all animals, but in the sexual form of all kinds of vegetable life. But the Bible is our authority. The divine institution of marriage is clearly taught, both in the Old and the New Testament. In the opening pages of the Divine volume we read these words, "And the Lord said, it is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helpmate for him." And in the New Testament we have these words, from the lips of the Son of God himself, "Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh; wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matt. xix. 4—6.)

What does the text teach concerning marriage? It teaches:—

I. That marriage implies MORAL ROYALTY ON THE PART OF THE HUSBAND. Wives are here commanded to *submit* themselves unto their husbands "as unto the Lord." The husband is here called the "*head* of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church," and the apostle concludes the paragraph by saying, "Let the wife see that she *reverence* her husband." The idea of supremacy, therefore, on the part of the husband, is manifest throughout the passage. But what is the rule to be? Not the rule of superior muscular force or intellectual power. Such a rule would be despotism and nothing less. The apostle teaches here that the husband's rulership should be similar to that rulership that Christ holds over the Church.

First: The husband is to rule by *moral* influence. How does Christ rule the Church? Not by force, but by love; by the royalty of His character, the sublimity of His thoughts, the divine grandeur of His aims. The Church bows lovingly to His authority, because of the supremacy of His excellence. Thus the husband is to rule the wife, for "the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church." It is only as the wife sees in her husband true moral grandeur that she can bow loyally to his sceptre, and feel a loving reverence in her heart.

Secondly: The husband is to rule for *benificent* ends. (1.)

The rule is to be *restorative*. "He is the saviour of the body." This refers to Christ. The Church is His body, He is to it what the soul is to the body—the ever-present animating, controlling spirit.\* So the grand object of the husband should be to *save* his wife—save her from all that is mean and coarse, from all that degrades the character or pains the soul. Her true elevation, and not the gratification of her vanity, or pride, or lower appetites should be his master aim. (2.) The rule is to be *universal*. "In everything." It is to extend through the whole of domestic life. Indeed a true moral rule over the heart will extend to "everything" in the woman's life. The rule is (3) to be *self-sacrificing in spirit*. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it." The husband's love should be that of the highest chivalry—a love that shrinks at no sacrifice in order to bless and ennoble the partner of his choice. It must be of the same kind as that which prompted Christ to give Himself for the salvation of the world. Ay, and he must have the same grand object, too—viz., the perfect *cleansing* of his bride from all that is morally corrupt. Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; what for? "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." It is said that the glowworm never shines after it has become a parent. Some women lose the lustre of all delicacy and refinement under the influence of men whom they call their husbands. The aim of the true husband should be to make the character of his wife a "glorious" character, "without spot or blemish."

Behold and admire this divine picture of a *true* husband! The marriage in which there is not such a husband, is no *true* marriage. It is an impious mimicry. When a woman in the marriage ceremony of churches is called upon to *obey* a man smaller in intellect, narrower in sympathies, and inferior in moral character to herself, she is called upon to do violence to her nature—to do that, in fact, which the eternal laws of mind forbid her in sincerity and truth ever to perform. Who can admire the contemptible, who can reverence the mean? The man should

\* See a sketch on the whole passage—its application to Christ—vol. i., Editor's series, p. 364.



appear as a morally royal man in her eyes or he is no true husband at all. The passage teaches,

II. That marriage implies MORAL LOVEABLENESS ON THE PART OF THE WIFE. "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." If the wife is to be loved, she must be loveable, for it is as impossible for the human mind to love the morally unbeautiful, as it is to believe a mathematical contradiction. There are women who are morally hideous, and from whom all manly natures must revolt with disgust. What is the truly loveable in a wife? Personal beauty? This may fascinate the eye for a short time, but it has no power to generate moral esteem. Brilliant genius or sparkling accomplishments? No; these may charm the fancy, but never evoke the true germ of manly love. What is the loveable? The text suggests two of its elements.

First: *A vital sympathy with the spirit of a true husband.* "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it as the Lord the Church." The true husband we have described: he is a royal man, who rules by moral influence for beneficent ends in the spirit of self-sacrificing love; and the true wife must have such a vital sympathy with that high moral spirit of his as to make the "twain one flesh." His aims are elevated, his spirit is Christ-like, and her whole heart being in vital accord with his—they are "no more twain, but one flesh." God, not priests nor hireling registrars has joined them together.

Another element of loveableness in a wife which the passage suggests is—

Secondly: *A love-centralising power of character.*—There must be that fascination and bewitchment of moral spirit about her that will draw the affections of her husband from all the dearest of other objects, and centre them on herself. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." He should discover in her virtues so numerous and strong as to draw his sympathies even from the nearest of his other relations and centre them on her, feeling that he can repose in her his utmost confidence and bestow on her his choicest love.

CONCLUSION.—It is obvious that the world abounds with *spurious* marriages. The popular idea of marriage is a legalised union of one man to one woman. Though the union may be formed by mere sensual impulses and selfish considerations, it is still called a marriage. Though it be formed not only without any relative fitness between the parties conjoined, but a painful discrepancy in temper, age, health, education, it is still called a marriage. Though it be formed without any element of moral excellencies as a foundation, and without mutual love for virtue, simply because no mutual virtue exists, still it is called a marriage. The woman may be destitute of every high quality, immersed in sensuality and pride, still at the altar the man pledges to her his love ; and the man may be a little soul, in every respect inferior to the woman, yet at the altar she pledges him reverence and obedience. Nothing is more baneful to a country than the corruption of the marriage institution. The law of England, alas ! unites brutes and fiends together as well as saints.

“For marriage is a matter of more worth  
Than to be dealt in by attorneyship :  
For what is wedlock forced, but a hell,  
An age of discord and continual strife :  
Whereas the contrary bringeth forth happiness,  
And is a pattern of celestial bliss.”

SHAKESPEARE.

“The marriage life is always an *insipid*, a *vexatious*, or a *happy* condition. The first is when two people of no genius or taste for themselves meet together, upon such a settlement as has been thought reasonable by parents and conveyancers, from an exact valuation of the land and cash of both parties. In this case the young lady’s person is no more regarded than the house and improvements in purchase of an estate ; but she goes with her fortune, rather than her fortune with her. These make up the crowd or vulgar of the rich, and fill up the number of the human race without beneficence towards those below them, or respect towards those above them. The *vexatious* life arises from a conjunction of two people of quick taste and resentment, put together for reasons well known to their friends, in which especial care is taken to avoid (what they think the chief of evils) poverty, and insure to them riches, with every evil besides. These good people live in a constant constraint before company, and too great familiarity alone. When they are within observation, they fret at each other’s carriage and behaviour : when alone, they revile each other’s person and conduct. In company, they are in purgatory : when only together, in a hell. The *happy* marriage is, when two persons meet and voluntarily make choice of each other, without principally regarding or neglecting the circumstances of fortune or beauty. These may still love in spite of adversity or sickness : the former we may in some measure defend ourselves from ; the other is a portion of our very make.”—STERLE.

## Germs of Thought.

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*Subject* : POSSESSION OF THE MIND OF CHRIST.

“But we have the mind of Christ.”—1 Cor. ii. 16.

*Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Eighty-eighth.*

**S**PIRITUAL vision is the theme of which these words form a portion. There is a state of mind which is described as unspiritual, or carnal, which cannot *read* the things of God; and *this* is the state of all those who are not in devout fellowship with God's Mind—who are subject to inspirations from the lower animal life. But to those who are governed by the spirit of God's inspiration of their spirit, Divine Realities are clearly manifested. In St. Paul's words, “The natural man receiveth not the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can *he know* (them), because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth (or discerneth) all things,” &c. “For who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

Possession of the mind of Christ is the condition of (1) discernment of Divine things; (2.) Of imparting the instruction which that discernment puts in possession of. So great are the benefits which flow from the possession of an open spiritual eye. So great is the loss of those who cannot see eternal realities. “If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His,” are words which aid the interpretation of the assertion, “We have the mind of Christ.” What is the mind or spirit of Christ of which every Christian man is possessed?

I. IT IS THE INTENTION of Christ. Now, the purpose of Christ is gathered from His life, His deeds, His words. That purpose was, we are taught, to do the will of His father, and to bring mankind into harmonious relationship with Him. So that Christ's purpose, or intention, was in all respects the redemption of the world from evil to goodness. He was ever right in His wish, in His desire, in His ruling motive, in His intention.

In Him there was nothing of "Letting I dare not wait upon I would." Whatever struggle there was with evil, we are taught that the victory was given to the pure purpose of our Redeemer.

The ruling principle of St. Paul's was the same as that of Christ's own life. So is the ruling principle of every Christian's life, for he has the spirit of Christ; and as the intention is a principal element of spiritual life, he possesses the intention of Christ.

Brethren! We must know whether our cherished intentions are ever honourable towards God, and towards our brethren—mankind. We can ascertain what determination is dominant in our life. We may ever determine the nearness of our purpose to that of Christ our exemplar. Sincerity here is essential, as it is in all things, although outer and inner imperfections may co-exist with an honestly intended conformity of life to the well-known Law of Right—the law of God. Every Christian may fairly estimate his own spiritual latitude and longitude—may know how far he has or has not the mind of Christ.

Here is a starting point of greatest worth in the Christian course. Do we intend to live rightly? Are we purposed that our lips shall not offend? Are our hearts set to keep the ways of God? However far we may have fallen short of the fulfilment of the purpose, is it cherished prayerfully? For right action is sure to follow prayerfully cherished purpose of goodness.

But in the care to cultivate right intentions and their legitimate consequences, are we to forget or ignore wrong ones? The acknowledgment of a purpose of evil is one important means of overcoming it. In the inner and outer conflict with evil, the victory is given to victorious achievement of righteously cherished intention to effect good. Yea, right action, in opposition to wrong inclination, is wholly right; for the higher nature grows with exercise. Were there no temptation to resist evil, there would be no victory on the side of right.

Now, the spirit of Christ is given us that our intention may be Christlike. We none of us have the mind of Christ apart from the free gift of His spirit. The whole question of a Healed Will comes into the resolute outworking of righteous

intention. What will was ever stronger than the will of Christ? When His face was set to go to Jerusalem, vain was every attempt to dissuade Him from His purpose. He met every temptation with an unflinching will. Prayerfully He purposed to yield Himself to His Father's will, and unwaveringly He carried out His determination.

Here is at once our guiding Light and our strengthening power. We have the mind of Christ both as an *Example* to follow and a *Strength* to help us. Our eye may well, therefore, be fixed on Christ, our Inspirer and Strengtheners—our hope and our joy; from whom flows freely forth the spirit of righteousness—the Holy Spirit.

II. IT IS THE BRAVERY OF CHRIST. We speak of a boy or a man of spirit; or of the spirit of a body of men. A brave boy, or a brave man, or a brave body of men, is the object of all admirers. For bravery is the true mark of greatness—is the outcome of a Divine quality. We boast in England of our Arthurs, our Alfreds, our Henry Fifths, and our Wellingtons; Scotland glories in her Wallaces, and Switzerland in her Tells. Each nation has its cherished names, which are hallowed and honoured in its history. So precious is courage—is bravery to a nation's worth and well-being.

But all these heroic virtues, pre-Christian or sub-Christian, have been drawn from Christ and His Father as the one fountain of all true human Christian virtues and graces. Christ is the embodiment of all possible bravery—of heroic valour and virtue. Before Roman ruler and Hebrew high-priest He witnessed a good confession. Single-handed He braved the coalition of all enemies. In His hour of weakness and darkness He fought and vanquished the powers of evil in their entirety of combination. From first to last He foreknew all the consequences of His deeds of utter righteousness. He dared the antagonism of Rome, of Judea, of Earth, of Hell.

We, too, have the bravery of Christ, because we possess the imparted spirit of Christ. We need not flinch before the face of foes, or before the leagued assault of malevolent and hateful adversaries. Courage—the crowning quality of righteousness—is the endowment which is afforded us in the bequest of our



Redeemer ; and, therefore, we may each new day achieve some new victory—advancing from strength to strength, from conquest to conquest.

We fight for Christ because He first fought for us. We fight against our own evils. We need the courage to confess them—to slay them both secretly and openly. For self-conquest is the condition of all other conquests. “He who rules his own spirit is greater than he who takes a city ;” therefore, the victory at home is greater than the victory abroad.

Yet are there innumerable victories to be won. Demons of injustice, of cruelty, stalk abroad ; and therefore we need to strike and slay with the sword of truth. The courage to act and speak truthfully at all times is the best possible use of the sword. A true man is one of God’s most effective weapons against evil—a sin-slaying power. The Christian warrior is carrying on a death-wrestle with the foes of God and men. He also must fight till all enemies are beneath his feet, otherwise he must himself be conquered by his foes, and so be ignominiously slain.

But the Captain of the redeemed host is the impartor of strength to the faint, of courage to the cowardly, who confess their dependence upon Him. The Lord of Hosts is a man of war, because He has come to bruise Satan under the feet of His followers ; to make an end of sin, and to *destroy* (nothing less) the works of the devil. Nor can He fail. It is not a war of words merely, but a war of deeds that the Son of David and the Son of God is carrying on. Each conquest of each good soldier of Jesus Christ is another of Christ’s victories added to those which have been already achieved. The view behind and before is one of vanquished rebels—of sinners smitten and of devils bound. Brethren, would we too have God’s joy within our spirits, we needs must fight our daily battle against our known and unknown foes. We must needs quit ourselves like men and be strong ; we must undeviatingly dare the darkest demons and the direst wars. And we have the mind of Christ for the fight. Therefore need we not fear. This is our gospel to the nations and the churches. Passive endurance is not the predominating Christian grace, but energetic effort to overcome evil with good by the strength which is ever streaming forth

from the spirit of Christ. The clarion note of the gospel is still, "Fight the good fight of faith," and so "lay hold on eternal life"—the life of victorious goodness. The company of the glorified is the Church triumphant, as the Church is intended to be for ever. All are predestinated to sing, "We have the mind of Christ." Therefore, "not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory for ever." The Lamb that was slain is the Leader of the purified hosts for ever, for His blood has made every white-robed warrior pure.

III. IT IS THE SPIRIT OF DISCERNMENT, of judgment, of truth. An absolutely right judgment in all things is the judgment of Christ. There was more than magnetic certainty in the judgment, the teaching, the utterance, the mind of Christ. The justice of His judgment He declared to be independent in the performance of His Father's will, which He did perfectly. He saw all that there was in the Father's bosom; and He saw it to reveal it to us by His spirit. Ere creation's glories were manifested He beheld them seminally in the mind of God. Their unfolding was the development of His own knowledge.

*Mind* is the receptacle, rather the assimilator and the evolver of truth. For mind broods over the infinite deeps of being, and ascends the heights of existence. Mind manipulates the material and spiritual entities of the universe. There is no limit to its power. There is nothing hid from the might thereof. Power of vision gathers up all the spiritual energies of the soul.

Unerring certainty was seen in Christ. Always, He perfectly expressed what He perfectly saw. We learn this the more we are enabled to enter into His utterances, and so apprehend the mind that imparted itself in words. He was Truth. He did Truth. He spake Truth. We have His mind. The secrets that pertain to God, to Humanity, to Nature, were known to Christ. As we enter into His mind, we learn more and more of these illimitable knowledges which are really all one knowledge.

We do not yet know as we are known; but we have the mind of Christ, whereby we may ever grow in His knowledge, and impart what we know; for He is both the subjective power to know, and the object of knowledge. It is the mind of Christ within us that searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Just as the spirit of a man knows the things of a man. Shakespeare so knew our humanity as to describe it. So the Spirit knows Christ, and Christ knows God.

Here is the warranty for divine knowledge. It cannot be true that of the Highest nothing can be known if we have the mind of Christ. He that knoweth the Son knoweth also the Father: for the Father is in the Son, as Christians are in Him. Such unity is there in truth—in being. For truth is that which *is*, and not merely the conceptions or opinions which are formed respecting what *is*. The nearer we come to everlasting fact and reality, the nearer we come to Christ, and the nearer to Christ, the nearer to everlasting fact and reality—the nearer to God.

We have the mind of Christ as an inspiration from within, and a vision of boundless truth from without. So that we may for ever advance in spiritual beauty and excellence. "Visions of God" are ours, and we may look for developments of truth which shall be altogether new. For there is no exhaustion of truth and knowledge in God, any more than in goodness and beauty. The depositary of all possible perfection is this ever adorable mind of Christ, of which we are made partakers. All men are drawing from it, but none can exhaust it, or wholly set it forth. We are in contact with it in all true research within ourselves or within books, or nature, or art, or life. We know not what discovery we may make as we draw from Him new power, new life, new strength, new blessedness, new holiness and love.

IV. IT IS THE SPIRIT OF HARMONY—of salutation—of peace. Discernment of truth—courage in its utterance and life—intention of righteous endeavour—harmony of spirit and character with God, are comprehended in the inheritance of the mind of Christ.

It was the habit of our Redeemer to salute His disciples with "Peace be unto you." Some of His farewell words were, "My peace I give unto you." His own purpose of bringing them into utter harmony with Himself was evidenced by His habitual salutation. He knew that His love would enkindle theirs; His truth evoke their love of truth; His purity of purpose generate new purity in them; His peace possess their spirits; lastly, His nature assimilate their nature to His own.

Harmony of heart with God and His children is a source of unfailing spiritual wealth. Union with all goodness, and with all the good, is a blessedness of the first order. We can obtain no substitute for goodness—no compensation for the loss of Divine approval—of the smile of God. Peace is the response of the heart to God's uttered and enacted approbation. A peaceful family, a peaceful society, or neighbourhood, a peaceful nation, are enacted definitions of the nature of peace. But a spirit purified, inspired, raised to perfect fellowship with God, is in possession of a peace which passeth all understanding. We rarely attain to the peace of God—to the rest of perfect action. Peace is the condition of fruitfulness of spiritual life. There is waste where the forces of the spirit are unreconciled, and flow not together in the production of works of goodness. As perfect health results from the perfect performance of all the functions of the body, and is the means of that performance, so is peace of the entire co-operation of all the spiritual energies with God felt in the heart. Wherein we understand that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost—in the Spirit of Christ. That kingdom is also a constitution for humanity—an harmony of relationships, and co-operations and productivities—a reign of righteousness, wherein joy in the Holy Ghost is the crowning felicity.

V. IT IS THE LOVE OF CHRIST. St. Paul was an apostle of love as well as St. John. He declared that without charity or love he was nothing. When he declares that he had the mind of Christ, he was conscious that he had the love of which Christ was the embodiment. It was Christ's love which constrained him to endure the loss of all things that he might be the channel of that Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

It is sometimes spoken of as a possibility that Christianity may not be the highest form of religion, but that some higher revelation may supersede it. What higher Power can there possibly be than that of Truth and Love? Christ is that living power. We worship all truth and all love in Him our Head. The fruit-bearing of Christ's mind is love to all that exists, for the sake of Him of whom are all things. To say that Christ's mind

was a Loving Mind, is as though we said that the sun was bright. Christ is another name for love, and the power of love—for wisdom, and the might of wisdom—for God, and the glory of God. Well may we love Him who gives us Himself—His own mind, and heart, and life. Love is Atonement: and when we receive the mind of Christ as St. Paul received it, we shall be uniters of men in the life of Him who gathers all together in one—who encompasses creation with His redemptive energy, and whose mind is the Sensorium of Mankind and the Universe; that all may become the perfect transcript of that perfect mind, in which the totality of regenerated and renovated souls participate for ever.

WILLIAM ROBERT PERCIVAL.

*St. Mark's, Whitechapel.*



*Subject: THE WORLD'S LIGHT. — (No. I.)*

"I am the light of the world."—John viii. 12.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Eighty-ninth.

**I**N these words Christ has given us one of those brief but pregnant figurative descriptions of Himself, in His mediatorial character, with which the records of His discourses abound. On reading it, we are instantly struck with the resemblance between it and a number of familiar Old Testament scriptures—"The Lord God is a Sun," "The Lord is my Light," &c., &c. Such as these, considered in connection with our text, bring us, by an easy and natural progress of thought, to Christ's oft-repeated declaration, "My doctrine is not mine, but the Father's which sent me;" and so we arrive at the truth that He refers to Himself here as the *God-man*.—If we bear this in mind, He will present Himself to us as—

#### I. THE DIVINE LIGHT REVEALING HUMANITY TO ITSELF.

First: *In its actual and degraded condition.* Black and white, purity and pollution, are the same to us in the dark; but let in the light, and how apparent does the difference



become ! Contrast the self-satisfaction of the heathen wallowing in unutterable abomination, with the shame and confusion of face of our first parents shunning God after their fall, when they discover themselves to be left

“Of honour void,  
Of innocence, of faith, of purity,  
Their wonted ornaments now soiled and stained ;

And when Adam exclaims—

“How shall I behold the face  
Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy  
And rapture so oft beheld ? Those heavenly shapes  
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze  
Insufferably bright.”

The former grope in moral darkness ; upon the sullied spirits of the latter is flashed the unveiled glory of Infinite Purity Himself. This Light remains undimmed, and its “insufferable” brightness is now flooding the world in Christ. Take that one emanation, the Sermon on the Mount, and flash it upon the world’s conventional and actual morality, and what contorted and hideous objects rise to view ! What pollution is discovered ! What are known as prudence, wisdom, courage, benevolence, &c., assume other forms and other names. Beneath the rays of this Light what human heart, uncleansed, is not “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked ?” What life is not an “unclean thing ?” Who but must regard his “best righteousnesses as filthy rags ?” The darkest corners of the human heart, and the blackest recesses of human society are reached and reformed by this Light.

Secondly : *In its ennobled and ideal state.* The numerous human systems of philosophy and religion which have appeared since the fall have all developed, in some sort, their ideals of humanity ; but these have proved either defective or positively erroneous. Here Christianity alone is perfect, for its founder is the only perfect man. Christ exhibits to the world the Divine idea of true manhood ; and that, not by a mere series of abstract propositions, but by the real drama of a perfect human life. Our Father has graciously embodied our true ideal in a real life ; and as we trace the Christ of the gospels from Bethlehem to

Calvary, we find that we are studying an endless series of facts and occurrences charged with revelations of a nature, a mere glance at whose potentialities fills us with awe, and the contemplation of whose essential, Divine nobility arouses within us feelings of unutterable abhorrence of the sin which could so far effect its ruin. To study the human side of the life of Jesus is to study essential humanity, free from the blots and stains of sin. Nor does this study tantalize, by merely revealing the intensity of the darkness by which we are enveloped, by discovering the magnitude of our loss, the depth of our degradation. Christ is a ladder of embodied Light, extending completely from the bottom of our "horrible pit" right up to humanity's true platform in the universe of moral being. And as we diligently and devoutly expose our spirits to the beams of this Light, His words, "I am the Light of the world," "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," "Follow me," will discover the practical force with which they are charged, and assume to us a diviner beauty of spiritual meaning every day. Let our ideal be "the Man Christ Jesus."

II. THE DIVINE LIGHT REVEALING HIMSELF TO HUMANITY. Old Testament revelations were, *first*, partial in themselves; *secondly*, partial as to the portion of the race for which they were made; and, *thirdly*, of such a character as to operate largely, if not chiefly, upon those emotions and principles of human nature through which deep and permanent spiritual reformation is seldom effected. These things all obviated by the revelation made in Christ. "In Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person." In Him the distant becomes near, the abstract assumes palpable and impressive properties. Jehovah appeals not now to a somnolent part of our nature, indirectly, and from an infinite distance; He speaks to us face to face, as a man to his friend; and we receive communications and impressions directly from Him through our ordinary human capacities and susceptibilities. To the spirit which yearns for a view of the Father, Jesus responds, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In Christ God reveals Himself anew—

First: *In His hatred of sin.* This more clearly perceived, and felt. Jehovah's stern and terrible dealings with wayward Israel, and with idolatrous and sensuous Gentile nations, induce a profound awe of His justice, purity, and power; but the incarnation, humiliation, tears and sufferings of "Him who came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," supply an entirely new revelation of His abhorrence of sin—such a revelation as leads men to *realize* its hateful character.

Secondly: *In his love for the sinner.* No profound study of nature is now necessary to prove whether or not "God is love." "God so loved the world," &c. Study the spirit of Christ's life, but especially such manifestations as the parable of the Prodigal Son, the scene just before the raising of Lazarus, the weeping over Jerusalem, Gethsemane, and the Cross.

Thirdly: *As the Guide unto all truth.* (Worthy of note, though only suggested here by our text, that our Western civilization, which is so rapidly revolutionizing the world, is, with all its achievements and potentialities, an outgrowth of Christianity.) Those deep problems of life and destiny, which must have remained matters of mystery and speculation to the subtlest unaided intellect, are familiar and simple facts to the disciple of Christ. The tangled labyrinth of moral questions which had distracted the profoundest minds, and led myriads into the wildest mazes of error, are now revealed truths. "Life and immortality are brought to light through the Gospel." By following the leadings of this Guide, we may attain to a holy familiarity with "the deep things of God," "may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the height," &c.

Let us beware of closing our eyes against the Light, of rejecting the proffered offices of the Guide! To walk in moral darkness, and alone, is, inevitably, to stumble, and to go astray. Eternal Light! shine Thou upon our spirits with the glory of Thy truth and love. Cleanse us of every dark impurity, and ever guide our feet aright.

SAMUEL SLOCOMBE.

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## The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbosities; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

No. VII.—ROBERT ROBINSON.

*Subject* : OBEDIENCE, THE TRUE TEST OF LOVE TO CHRIST.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”—John xiv. 15.

**I**F ye love me !” “*If* ye love me !” O cruel “*If*,” why is this? Is it possible that there can be a doubt? However deplorable the case, let us enter into our own hearts; let us do Christ justice, and let us acknowledge, that if on the one hand there be the highest excellence in Him, which is the greatest reason of man’s love to Him, on the other there is the deepest depravity in us; and it is matter of fact that though this should be the clearest of all things, it is, most of all things with relation to man, that which may and ought to be doubted of. Hear your divine Master, Christians; He does not mean to put your souls to shame; He is the skilful Physician, telling you the worst of the case, but with the kind intention of restoring you to health.

Let us enter upon the subject.

I. JESUS CHRIST MERITED THE HIGHEST ESTEEM OF ALL HIS PEOPLE. You see I change the word “love” for “esteem,” and the truth of the matter is, I do not know any word equal to the just idea we wish to convey by it. Love is the noblest passion of the human soul, but it often appears the most ridiculous because it often blindly pursues objects least of all fit for it. We are afraid, therefore, when we speak of such an object as Jesus Christ, to talk of loving Him, lest the miser should think we mean that regard to Christ which a wretch has for his money; or, that the man who lives only to love himself, should think that the regard we have to Christ resembles his love to himself; or, lest the parent should think the regard we have to Christ is the

regard he has to his children. It is all that is good in each of these, and it is infinitely more. It is something we call love for want of a better word, but it is something which others call attachment, a cleaving to an object; and some call it esteem and veneration. Call it what we will, it is a sacred passion, a bond that unites the soul to Jesus Christ. It has this mark of its divinity, it outlives mortality. Jesus Christ merits such love from us—

First: *Because in Himself (independently of all the benefits flowing from Him), He is most lovely of all objects.* If I were never to derive a benefit from Him, I should think it a blessing to me at present even to read His history.

Secondly: *Because from Him the disciples have received instruction.* One great business of His life—the very Wise One—was to communicate His own ideas, *e. g.* of God, man's future state, &c. He opened to us the invisible Heart of God.

Thirdly: *Because of His Merit.*—The glory of His priesthood, a Daysman, great and pure enough to speak to God, kind and meek enough to speak to man.

Fourthly: *Because of His Laws.*—Left to ourselves we perversely avoid Christ as we would a tyrant. When any of us are pressed into His service, (as unconverted people) we are very uneasy under it, and glad when it is over. While we are held to it, we are birds kept in the unnatural heated place of a human hand, and when we are let go and the service is over, we are birds in the natural expanse. Nevertheless sin was not made for man, or which is the same, man's soul was not made for sin. Man is a kind of large complicated machine, all the wheels go placid and smooth and easy only when he works righteousness and holiness. Oft his anger, in contrast with Christ's Law of Forgiveness, despair in contrast with Christ's Law of Hope, &c., are illustrations.

II. THERE ARE IN HIS DISCIPLES SUCH THINGS AS RENDER THEIR LOVE TO CHRIST SUSPICIOUS.—There are melancholy proofs. (a) Sad neglect of public worship. (β) Backward also in prayer. (γ) Reluctant to study the Scriptures. (δ) Passion easily agitated. (ε) Fear of death. These, even if they do not disprove the *being* of love, indicate absence of *growth* of love.



III. CHRIST'S METHOD OF GETTING RID OF ALL THAT RENDERS OUR LOVE TO HIM SUSPICIOUS.—“If ye love me keep my commandments,” which is equal to saying, if you would put your love out of all doubt, put your obedience out of all doubt. Go into His gospel as a man goes on board a ship, all in all, body and soul. If you would put your love to Christ out of doubt, you must keep his commands—

First: *Universally*. One cause of doubt is that you keep them partially. You look upon yourself as a sort of gentleman to whom Christ proposes His laws as a matter of complimentary invitation, and you reject it, as if you had as much right to reject His invitations as He has to give them. The wicked spirit makes us take and pick Christ's commandments, take this and leave that; *e.g.*, some, baptism; some, Lord's supper; some, giving to the poor; some, humility. We are all inclined by our individual constitutions to keep some or other of Christ's commandments. One, for instance, likes retirement, he finds it easy to obey the command, “enter into thy closet, pray,” &c. That same person is perhaps also inclined to be strict and covetous. Now, if he, besides obeying the constitutional commandment, observe such also as go against his disposition, he would be showing that he loved Christ, and *therefore* obeyed.

Secondly: *Constantly*. In public and alone, with friends and in other company, obey Him, and then you are men that are in the high road to obtain a holy, universal life of love.

Thirdly: *Self-denyingly*. Cultivate the unfashionable as well as the popular virtues. Thus you will have a genuine mark of true Christianity, that love to Christ which rises out of an attachment to Him in cases where your own interest cannot possibly guide you.

Lord forbid our love to Thee should be doubtful. Let our love to everything in the world be doubtful rather than this.

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.



# Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXI.

*Subject: WICKED BALANCES.*

“Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?”—Micah vi. 10, 11.

**A**S King Solomon in the sententious gravity of iterated proverbs, so Micah the Morasthite with the fervour of prophetic excitement, denounces the scant measure that is abominable; and rifles, as it were, the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked; and echoes the Lord's voice crying unto the city, concerning such, “Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?” So too does Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoah, but also among the prophets, and who prophesied no smooth things against those who made the ephah small and the shekel great, and who falsified the balances by deceit, and manœuvred where and how to sell the refuse of the wheat. So again does Hosea, also a prophet—if a minor prophet, the first of the minor prophets—who declared the Lord's controversy with Judah, and with Ephraim exultant in having become rich, and having found him out substance. And how? “He is a merchant; the balances of deceit are in his hand.”

There is a legal punishment for short weights. If a grocer sells a pound of coffee as coffee, and it is only half-a-pound of coffee and the other half chicory, he is a transgressor of the law. But of the spirit, and even the letter, of the law, transgressors abound; always have abounded, and seemingly always will. At least a transatlantic moralist conceives that “when haberdashers choose the stand whose window hath the broadest light,” and

“When preachers tell us all they think,  
And party leaders all they mean,—  
When that we pay for, that we drink,  
From real grape and coffee bean,—

it will be about time to "order your ascension robe,"—a phrase in vogue with a sect not yet out of vogue, across the ocean, to say nothing of what flourishes on cisatlantic shores.

That trade trickery has in no age, or perhaps country, lacked its representative men, a very slight survey of universal history would suffice to show. The records of the "*Liber Albus*," compiled early in the fifteenth century, amply detail the then current misdoings of trade tricksters all and sundry. A modern assailant of the "vexatious" interference of the ruling powers with the free action of trade, in mediæval London, admits the frauds in those days to have been unquestionably frequent, and that it was the object of the civic authorities that every trader should really sell what he professed to sell, and that the buyers should be protected against adulterations, defective measures, and short weights. The mediæval millers, for example, are proved to have been great rogues in grain; while the bakers, again, had a trick of making their bread of a fine quality on the outside and coarse within. We hear, also, of their "making holes in their tables, called 'molding bordes,'" through which they were in the habit of stealing the dough of those who brought it to be baked. The fishmongers, too, seem to have had a trick called "colouring"—that is, of putting good fish on the top of their baskets, and inferior beneath. Plautus had long before had his fling at "*Piscatores, qui præbent populo pisces fætidus*." Then, again, the ale-wives of mediæval London used to thicken the bottoms of their ale-measures with pitch; and in short it is in evidence that the tricks of mediæval trade generally, as far as comparative ignorance permitted, might vie with the adulterations of latter-day tricksters.

Dr. Wynter, in his article in the *Quarterly Review* on "Food and its Adulterations," expresses himself glad to find, as regards bread, the great bread-producer, that many of the adulterations mentioned by our older writers have vanished with the advent of free trade, all such sophistications as plaster-of-Paris, bone-dust, the meal of other cereal grains, white clay alum, sulphate of copper, &c., mentioned by Prince and Accum, having disappeared; although the bakers of bread marked under the market price are in the habit of using what they call "hards" and

“stuff” (alum and salt) to bring up to the required colour and taste the bread they have made from inferior and damaged wheat. Doctor Smollett, a hundred years ago, was writing his own experience when assigning it to Matthew Bramble, who says : “The bread I eat in London is a deleterious paste, mixed up with chalk, alum, and bone-ashes ; insipid to the taste, and destructive to the constitution.” The same caustic censor denounces London milk as the worst of its kind, worsened yet more by being thickened with the worst flour into a bad likeness of cream ; “but the milk itself should not pass unanalysed ; the produce of faded cabbage leaves and sour draff, lowered with hot water, frothed with bruised snails, carried through the streets in open pails, exposed to foul rinsings,” &c. &c., here left nondescript, though Dr. Smollett, to be sure, leaves them *not* undescribed. Nor in his catalogue of London dainties does he omit mention of the beer, “guiltless of malt and hops, vapid, and nauseous ;” or of the “tallowey, rancid mass called butter, manufactured with candle-grease and kitchen-stuff.” It must be allowed that Tobias, M.D., sometimes revelled in the nasty, and was in his element in the coarse.

As for our own day, the result of the *Lancet* commission went to prove that tea, snuff, and sugar confectionery are, or were, largely “qualified” with such alternatives as the three chromates of lead, carbonate of lead and of copper, chromates of potash, orpiment, Prussian blue, Antwerp blue, indigo, ultramarine, and the like ; that sulphuric acid was a main constituent in vinegar and gin ; that *terra alba*, or Cornish clay, went far towards the making of flour, starch, and cocoa ; that acetate of lead was largely in request for wine, cider, and rum ; that *cocculus indicus* was a frequent ingredient in beer, blue vitrol in preserves, Venetian red in sauces, and black lead in certain black teas.

Now, a consumer entering a shop and asking for any article, is justly said to have a right to expect that he will be supplied with what he wants, and for which he pays : the words coffee, cocoa, mustard, convey distinct ideas, and any application of those terms to mixtures and compounds is obviously deceptive and fraudulent. “Adulteration not only lowers the money value of an article, but it lessens its dietetical qualities, and in many cases

renders it positively unwholesome, as where injurious substances are introduced." For some years previous to the microscopic raid against its enormities, adulteration had become a complete science, and was practised with consummate art and skill; substances of less value being used, for the sake of their bulk and weight, as substitutes for dearer articles, under the name of which alone they were generally sold, while colouring matters were freely added, and pungent suggestives to rectify the flavour, and pigmentary poisons to please the eye. One medical authority affirmed the average breakfast-table to be built up of adulterations: "there's lime in the eggs (year-old eggs, pickled in lime-water), sand in the sugar, horse-blood in the coffee, and, perhaps, mahogany saw-dust." Of fifty samples of green tea analysed by Dr. Hassall, all were adulterated. Ground coffee had for its grounds roasted wheat, acorns, carrots, scorched beans, roasted parsnips, mangold-wurzel, lupin-seeds, dog's biscuits, burnt sugar, red earth, roasted horse-chestnuts, "and above and beyond all, baked horses' and bullocks' livers." The grossest fraud was, in fine, proved to reign throughout the British public commissariat. Sharp-pointed pens have done their best against what is truly styled a true social evil, while alleging the difficulty of saying fine things about False Weights and Measures; for how, it is asked, can you get moral or tale or impressiveness out of a coal-dealer or a buttermilk, whose weights are short and his measures false? and where is the man who can glow and swell and thrill a multitude with the iniquity of a ham and beef dealer, or a tripe-seller; by pointing to the weighted dish of a local greengrocer, or the short weights of the chandler? "The cheating petty trader of Lambeth and St. Pancras, of Finsbury and Deptford, is too mean to furnish the point of an epigram, or the climax of a thundering invective"—and so the poor folk in the New Cut, or up in Somers Town and Lisson Grove, it is found, would fain listen to denunciations of landlords and employers (in delivering which oratorical demagoguery *can* be sublime), rather than "quietly reckon up all that they are cheated out of by the pigmy swindlers who supply them with adulterated and inferior goods, and with unfair quantities even of these." It is not the rich only who have the will, and have found out a way, to grind the faces of the poor.



A modern seer of "The Mystery of Evil" makes no oversight of adulterators and their ways :

"Yet direr were a class of murderers sage  
 Who dealt round poisons—not that they might speed  
 Quicker unto some wealthy heritage,  
 But, in a small way, daily fortune breed :  
 Adulterators of whate'er can feed  
 Mortals, or slake their thirst. Perhaps the knife  
 Had more of mercy, in its ready deed  
 Of blood, than this destruction without strife,  
 Which charged with lingering death the pure well-heads of life."

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

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## Strange Psychological Facts.

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*Subject: MEMORY.*

**I**N memory we encounter the ofttest-noted marvel of hidden thought. It is a power that belongs even more to the unconscious than to the conscious mind. How and where we hide our knowledge so that it seems dead and buried ; and how in a moment we can bring it to life again, finding it in the dark where it lies unheeded amid our innumerable hoards, is a mystery over which every one capable of thinking has puzzled. The miracle here is most evident and most interesting when memory halts a little. Then we become aware that we are seeking for something which we know not ; and there arises the strange contradiction of a faculty knowing what it searches for, and yet making the search because it does not know. Moreover, nothing is commoner than, when a man tries to recollect somewhat and fails, to hear him say, "Never mind, let us talk of something else, I shall remember it presently," and then in the midst of his foreign talk, he remembers. So that the condition of his remembrance depends on this odd contradiction that he shall not only forget what he wants, but even forget that he wanted to remember it. When Daniel surpassed all the magicians, the astrologers, and the soothsayers of Babylon, by discovering to Nebuchadnezzar the dream which he had forgotten, he did not

perform a more wonderful feat than the king himself would have accomplished had he been able by an effort of his own memory to recover the lost vision. In the plenitude of his powers, Newton could not remember how he arrived at the binomial theorem, and had to fall back upon his old papers to enable him to discover the process.

The clue, but only a clue, to this perpetual magic of reminiscence lies in the theory of our hidden life. I do not attempt to follow out the explanation, since at best it only throws the riddle but a step or two backwards, and for the present inquiry it is enough that I should barely state the facts which indicate the reality and the intensity of our covert life. Strictly speaking the mind never forgets : what it once seizes, it holds to the death, and cannot let go. We may not know it, but we are greater than we know, and the mind, faithful to its trust, keeps a secret watch on whatever we give to it. Thus beams upon us the strange phenomenon of knowledge, possessed, enjoyed, and used by us, of which nevertheless we are ignorant—ignorant not only at times, but also in some cases during our whole lives.

First of all, for an illustration, take the well-known story of the Countess of Laval, who always in her sleep spoke a language which those about her could not understand and took for gibberish. On the occasion of her lying-in, however, she had a nurse from Brittany who at once understood her. The lady spoke Breton when asleep, although when awake she did not know a word of it, and could attach no meaning to her own phrases which were reported to her. The fact is that she had been born in Brittany, and had been nursed in a family where only the old Celtic dialect of that province was spoken. This she must have learned to prattle in her infancy. Returning to her father's home, where French only was spoken, and Breton not at all, she soon forgot her early speech—lost all traces of it in her conscious memory. Beyond the pale of consciousness, memory held the language firm as ever, and the Countess prattled in her dreams the syllables of her babyhood. Captain Marryat gives an account of what happened to himself, not so striking perhaps, but equally pertinent. A man belonging to his ship fell overboard, and he jumped into the sea to save him. As he rose to the surface he discovered that he was in the midst of blood. In an instant the horror of his situation flashed on him. He knew

that the sharks were around him, and that his life was to be measured by seconds. Swifter than pen can write it, his whole life went into the twinkling of an eye. Burst upon his view all that he had ever done, or said, or thought. Scenes and events in the far past which had been long blotted from his remembrance came back upon him as lightning. The end of the story is that he escaped, the sharks having followed the ship, while he, left behind, was picked up by a boat; but the point of it for us lies in the fealty of memory to its trust, and in the perfectness of the art by which it held all the past of the man's life to the veriest trifle of gossip in safe keeping. De Quincey, in the dreams of his opium-eating days, felt the same power in himself. Things which, if he had been told of them when waking he could not have acknowledged as parts of his former experience, were in his dreams so placed before him with all the chance colour and feelings of the original moment, that at once he knew them and owned their memorial identity. As he thus noted the indelibility of his memory, he leaped to the conjecture which divines before him had reached, that in the dread day of reckoning the book which shall be opened before the Judge is but the everlasting roll of remembrance.

In this unfailing record two things particularly call for attention; the first, that understanding is not essential to memory; the second, that the memory of things not understood may be vital within us. A word or two on each of these great facts.

That understanding is not essential to memory we see in children who learn by heart what has no meaning to them. The meaning comes long years afterwards. But it would seem as if the process which we have all observed on such a small scale goes on continually on a much larger scale. Absolute as a photograph, the mind refuses nought. An impression once made upon the sense, even unwittingly, abides for evermore. There has long been current in Germany a story about a maid in Saxony who spoke Greek. Henry More refers to the fact as a sort of miracle and an antidote against atheism. Coleridge tells a similar story of later date and with explanatory details. In a Roman Catholic town in Germany, a young woman, who could neither read nor write, was seized with a fever, and was said by the priests to be possessed of a devil, because she was heard talking Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Whole sheets of her ravings were

written out, and were found to consist of sentences intelligible in themselves but having slight connection with each other. Of her Hebrew sayings, only a few could be traced to the Bible, and most seemed to be in the Rabbinical dialect. All trick was out of the question; the woman was a simple creature; there was no doubt as to the fever. It was long before any explanation save that of demoniacal possession could be obtained. At last the mystery was unveiled by a physician who determined to trace back the girl's history, and who, after much trouble, discovered that at the age of nine she had been charitably taken by an old Protestant pastor, a great Hebrew scholar, in whose house she lived until his death. On further inquiry it appeared to have been the old man's custom for years to walk up and down a passage of his house into which the kitchen door opened, and to read to himself with a loud voice out of his books. The books were ransacked, and among them were found several of the Greek and Latin Fathers, together with a collection of Rabbinical writings. In these works so many of the passages taken down at the young woman's bedside were identified, and there could be no reasonable doubt as to their source. A succession of unintelligible sounds had been so caught by the ear that years afterwards the girl could in her delirium repeat them. And so we may say generally, that, whether we know it or not, the senses register with a photographic accuracy whatever passes before them, and that the register, though it may be lost, is always imperishable.

As it is only by a variety of illustrations that this great fact can be thoroughly impressed upon the mind, I may be allowed to detain the reader with yet another anecdote pointing to the same conclusion. It is told by Abercrombie; indeed, he has several like it. Thus, he makes mention of one of his patients who had in health no kind of turn for music, but sang Gaelic songs in his delirium. The most remarkable case, however, which he describes is that of a dull, awkward country girl—who was considered uncommonly weak of intellect, who in particular showed not the faintest sense of music, and who was fit only to tend the cattle. It happened that while thus engaged with cattle, she had to sleep next a room in which a tramping fiddler of great skill sometimes lodged. Often he would play there at night, and the girl took notice of his finest strains only as a disagreeable noise.

By and by, however, she fell ill, and had fits of sleep-waking, in which she would imitate the sweetest tones of a small violin. She would suddenly stop in her performance to make the sound of tuning her instrument, and then after a light prelude would dash off into elaborate pieces of music, most delicately modulated. I have forgotten to mention that in the meantime a benevolent lady had taken a liking to her, and received her into her family as an under-servant. This accounts for the fact of her afterwards imitating the notes of an old piano, which she was accustomed to hear in the house. Also, she spoke French, conjugated Latin verbs, and astonished everybody who approached her in her sleep-waking state, with much curious mimicry, and much fluent and sometimes clever talk on every kind of subject—including politics and religion. Here the Highland lass, is but exhibiting in another form the same sort of phenomenon as Coleridge described in the German girl. In both of these anecdotes the fact stands out clear, that the memory grips and appropriates what it does not understand—appropriates it mechanically, like a magpie stealing a silver spoon, without knowing what it is, or what to do with it. The memory cannot help itself, It is a kleptomaniac and lets nothing go by.

When we think of something preserved in the mind, but lost and well nigh irrecoverable, we are apt to imagine it as dormant. When we know that it was unintelligible, we are apt to imagine it as dead. On the contrary, the mind is an organic whole, and lives in every part, even though we know it not. Aldebaran was once the grandest star in the firmament, and Sirius had a companion star, once the brightest in heaven, and now one of the feeblest. Because they are now dim to us, are we to conclude that they are going out and becoming nought? The stars are overhead, though in the blaze of day they are unseen: they are not only overhead, but also all their influences are unchanged. So there is knowledge active within us of which we see nothing, know nothing, think nothing. Thus, in the sequence of thought, the mind, busied with the first link in a chain of ideas, may dart to the third or fourth, the intermediate link or links being utterly unknown to it. They may be irrecoverable, they may even be unintelligible, but they are there, and they are there in force.

E. S. DALLAS.



# The Preacher's Dissecting Room.

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"I SPEAK AS TO WISE MEN."

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No. VII.

C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D.

"**D**R. VAUGHAN has a way of being faithful to Scripture which is not altogether effective." We ventured on this remark towards the close of our last article ; and we promised to endeavour to explain and defend it in the number for this month. And the explanation turns entirely—as we partly intimated, indeed, in our last—on the extent and amount of Scriptural language which the preacher, on any occasion, sets himself to discuss. We may compare the portion so selected to a given area of garden ground chosen out of a stretch of garden territory of practically unlimited size. When once the gardener who selects such a portion for tenancy and cultivation, has made his selection, he is bound, of course, to do his best by that plot, and to confine himself to it almost entirely ; or, at any rate, only so far to concern himself about other plots as he may find useful for this one. But if this be the case after his selection has been made, the very terms of our supposition imply that it was not so beforehand. He was not required to take a certain amount of garden ground, or none at all ; he was not tied down to the adoption of one particular spot ; he could enclose as much or as little as he liked, and run his fences and boundary-lines in any direction he thought best. This is an accurate description of a preacher's position when about to deal with God's word. The field of Holy Scripture is "all before him where to choose his place" of operations. The various divisions of books and chapters and verses are no hindrance to his choice ; he can make his selection in the most arbitrary manner possible, just when and how he thinks best ; any amount anywhere he can shut off from all the rest and become the tenant of, for a time. It is exactly here, accordingly, that he requires to be careful, lest he should be tempted to undertake a portion to which it is beyond his power to do justice while his tenancy lasts. We think that Dr. Vaughan, with all his undoubted powers and practical wisdom, has been occasionally guilty of this mistake. Now and

then he leases an exegetical allotment of such princely dimensions, that by the time he has broken it up into beds, and formed the footpaths, and placed a few seeds or bedding plants in each border, he finds that his tenancy has expired. The sermon referred to before (Homilist, pp. 357—359), on the *Nunc Dimittis*, is an illustration in point. The three main divisions of that sermon—viz., Simeon's history up to the utterance of his song, the words of the actual song, and his subsequent prophecy to Joseph and Mary, are each of them amply sufficient for a sermon by itself, if not for much more. We believe, in fact, that a whole volume of sermons, not containing a particle of what is called "padding," and saying only that which is necessary in order to bring out the depth of truth and meaning and reference actually contained in the words, could easily be put together on the central division alone of these three, the marvellous Song itself. The effect, therefore, of combining in one sermon two other nearly co-equal divisions with that one, and of endeavouring to cultivate a garden about three times too ample (to say the least), may be easily conjectured. The whole discourse is an unsatisfying and tantalizing succession of hasty remarks and brief hints; and the ground is practically barren and unprofitable almost in proportion to its size. Other sermons, to which the same kind of remarks apply with more or less force, are those which bear the titles of "The Gospel of the Fall," and "The Gospel of the Flood." The latter one especially is positively audacious in the magnitude of its scope, reminding us of a friend who once undertook to lecture on the magnificent subject of "India: past, present, and future." Almost the whole history of antediluvian times, together with all the incidents, and lessons, and difficulties of the Flood itself, and all the events also that immediately followed on it, are embraced in the subject of this sermon, and are all touched on in some way. But the ultimate effect, we submit, is not good. It is like one of those abridgements of Universal History which are offered you for one shilling. They are far from cheap even then; and, except to those persons who are already acquainted with the facts they refer to, and who hardly require, in consequence, any books of the kind, they are little more than a weary string of unmeaning names and difficult dates. These over extensive expository discourses have a somewhat similar fault. They are too wide to be deep; they lose in power what they gain in extent; and, while they touch on a vast number of important points, and say that which is just and true about each, they leave only a very blurred and confused impression on the mind. A smaller scope, a closer investigation, a fuller method of explanation, would have been equally faithful to the supremacy

of Holy Scripture, and far more appreciative of its preciousness, and therefore far more conducive to its use.

In Dr. Vaughan's own case we think it highly probable that his great experience and success as a teacher have been the very things which have led him unconsciously into this undesirable peculiarity as a preacher. To a select class of diligent learners such as make up the better portion of a sixth-form at a good public school—or to a number of young men looking forward to ministerial work, and going out of the usual path in their anxiety to secure the best possible instruction—such a way of handling large portions of Scripture may prove of great use. Disciples of this kind begin by bringing their instructor a considerable amount of already acquired knowledge and thought on the subject of his instructions, especially in regard to its principal facts and details; and, besides that, are, generally speaking, unusually able and willing to acquire additional knowledge, and to exercise further thought. To such eager and careful students a careful and orderly view of the topics with which they are already acquainted, bringing out the mutual bearing of all the successive points, and so impressing them as a whole on the mind, would be of very great use. A few hints, also, such as this view would allow of, as to the best solution of knotty passages, and the best use of incidental features, would be just what such learners would be best prepared to welcome, and best qualified to employ. They want conclusions rather than processes—the guiding results of their master's learning, as of a higher and riper learning than their own; and are not so much like intending travellers studying a map in order to make out their future route, as like travellers who consult it after returning, with the object of methodizing and fixing the knowledge already gathered up. But a mixed congregation of hearers, many of whom do not care to learn much, and most of whom have learned very little, are in a widely different case. They are not prepared either to relish or to turn to account this touch-and-go system of instruction. They want pictures rather than maps, processes as well as conclusions, materials as well as methods, quantity as well as quality. On the whole, while we are no advocates for the mountebank practice of preaching on mere fractional portions of texts, as though to show off the preacher's agility in balancing himself on so inadequate a foothold, we are strongly of opinion, all the same, that a single self-contained scriptural passage, carefully analysed, illustrated, explained, and enforced, is far more profitable to ordinary audiences than a whole volume full of mere hints. “A word to the wise,” no doubt, “is enough;” but it is the destiny of the successful

preacher not so much to find men "wise unto salvation," as to cause them to become so.

There is this also to be duly considered on the point now in hand; viz., that in so far as mere hints have their use, and in so far as it may appear desirable to meet the case of those selecter hearers (spotted about amongst others like so many stars), whose attention can scarcely be retained except by the occasional utterance of pregnant and suggestive sayings, leading them to search and think out for themselves—there is always room for such sayings in the treatment of any scripture, even if it only consist of five words. For it is with the subject of a sermon as with that of a picture. In our judgment, a carefully worked out sermon on any integral passage of the Bible should always be, for general use, like one of those fully conceived and carefully finished paintings in which the subject is presented to the eye with every available resource of colour, shade, and perspective utilized to the utmost, thus enabling it to tell its story plainly to the least observant of spectators. But such a sermon, all the same, may abound, like such a picture, with skilful touches and conceptions, and subtle art effects sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the keenest art critic that looks on. What we regret in the present case is a style of composition entirely made up of such touches—an area of canvas so large, and a stretch of subject so panoramic as virtually to compel and confine the scriptural artist to this one method of treatment. A picture which is all suggestions is practically none at all to the general eye.

There is, however, one great and important object of all homiletic effort to which the above remarks apply with very much less force, if with any; and that is the cardinal object of affecting the conscience. We are very strongly of opinion that this is often accomplished most successfully, not so much by set and elaborate remonstrances and entreaties as by appeals of a sudden, casual, and incidental description. As to what is called the "improvement" of a subject—a portion of its treatment which some writers uniformly reserve for the conclusion of a sermon or tract—that is often no sort of improvement to anyone except to those who do not need it, on this very account. Such persons may be said to separate the bait and the trap—to fence them off, in fact, one from the other, so as to give to every unwilling bird every facility of escape. We much approve, therefore—at any rate, occasionally—of the adoption of a different plan. We like to see these thrusts at the conscience made at unexpected times and quarters; and to find the whole of a sermon, from beginning to end, characterised by a more or less manifest and earnest



anxiety to apply the subject under discussion to the conviction, and comfort, and direct spiritual edification of those who hear it. Dr. Vaughan seems very happy in this kind of running application; and gives many indications in these sermons of having examined and deeply studied the book of man's heart. We subjoin, in conclusion, some few illustrations of this very valuable feature in his discourses, though it must be obvious, of course, to all from the nature of the case that such flowers (if so we may call them) are only seen to full perfection in that precise locality in which they are grown. Let the reader, therefore, bear this in mind in judging of what follows.

Thus we read, in page 13, in the sermon called "Why He Came :"—

"There is no one amongst us—may God grant it—who deliberately expects both to keep his sin and yet to reach heaven. The heart is thus far true within, that it bears decisive witness against a conversion which is no change, against a justification which brings after it no sanctification. Nevertheless there is such a thing in all of us as a lazy, listless, lifeless acquiescence in a perpetual defeat, in small things or great, by the power of evil; a perpetual postponement of the struggle with, of the victory over, sin; a practical resting upon the Atonement, either in the present or in the future, as something which shall make up for all else, and carry the soul, however earthly and sin-bound, safely across the boundary line at last between death and life. Without presuming to expect to keep our sins and yet to be saved, there is a power in habit, and a readiness to rest, and a dislike to steady toil and protracted conflict, which may make us practically take one half of the Gospel and leave the other; believe that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and yet forget that for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might take away our sins, and destroy, in us individually, the works of the devil.

"Let it not be so any more, beloved friends, with us. Take the whole Gospel. Each half of it is to be prized above gold or precious stone. Not least, surely, that half of it which says, It was the object of Jesus Christ, in coming down from heaven for us men and for our salvation, to take away, to remove, to destroy in us, all that is sinful, all that is bad in us and base and sensual and devilish. He knew what He undertook, and He has strength to do it. Commit yourself to Him for this purpose. If this was his object in coming, that He might destroy the works of the devil, then surely He will not disappoint his own aim in any one who seriously looks to Him for strength. In the power to resist and conquer sin you will read the assurance of forgiveness and justification. 'Let no man deceive you,' St. John writes—the Holy Ghost that was in him providing thus for the warning and admonition of our own distant times—'he that doeth righteousness is righteous;' not he who has passed through certain experiences or certain excitements; not he who has felt certain feelings or suffered certain sufferings or seen certain sights; not he who has the liveliest impression of the sovereignty of grace or of the omnipotence of the Redeemer: but he who is enabled to show his faith in his works; he who is renewed day by day through the indwelling Spirit for the performance of duty and for the contest with sin; he who by pureness, by meekness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, fights the good fight of faith, and brings the whole body of sin into subjection. He who



came into the world to save sinners, was manifested also to take away our sins."

Again, in page 123, in "The Gospel of the Fall," we read thus :—

"Was there ever a truer or a livelier representation than that which is here given us, of the course, progress, and end of temptation as it is now daily acted over again upon this earth?"

"I would speak plainly here, and commend the words to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

"Yes, I address in these pages many who have sinned; sinned personally, repeatedly, and in manifest ways; manifest, I mean, to themselves, however veiled and secret from the eyes of others.

"Now I would ask them whether the record of Adam's sin is not also the record of theirs.

"(1.) You have noticed how the temptation opens. Something is presented just for consideration. Is there any harm—can there be anything really wrong—in doing this or that? Can God really have forbidden it? Yes, the mind makes answer to itself—or, which is the same thing, to the tempter within—it certainly is forbidden; I know it is wrong. I should like it, but I suppose I must not do it.

"The words are most of all appropriate to the case of gross sins, but they have their application to all sin; if it but be that of speech, or of temper, of imagination, or of omission.

"I must not do it. Still the thought is lodged there. It comes up again and again. I should like it, but it is forbidden.

"Now here, my young friends—for to you would I speak, who have not yet crossed the boundary line of actual known sin—here is the vital matter. These ponderings of sin, these parleyings with the temptation, these discussions with yourselves of forbidden indulgences, these are the things which you must resist, which by God's grace you must put down in yourselves, if you would keep yourselves unspotted and pure in the great matter of the soul's life."

Once more, in page 127 :—

"Hence shame; hence fear: shame when he sees himself naked; fear when he meets his God at evening, and at the voice, 'Where art thou?' must come forth and show himself to his Maker.

"O how many young men know the truth of this description! men who cannot quite give up all pretence of belief, cannot shake off the habit of evening prayer, even though they can overbear conscience, and do, and do again, the thing which they know is wrong! Yet even they know the bitterness of that after-shame, which makes them blush before themselves in secret; of that after-dread which haunts and oppresses the soul, when it drags itself back at night just to say its prayers! 'Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.'

"And then those excuses. What sin has not its excuse ready? Sometimes, its commonness: 'Every one commits it.' Sometimes the force of individual example: 'I could not stand alone.' Sometimes the influence of a warm affection: 'My own heart, my own kindness and love, led me into it.' Sometimes, O how often, circumstances—which are God's providence; or what we call temperament—which is God's creation! Who has not often charged God himself with the authorship of his sins? Why hast Thou made me thus? so impetuous, so passionate, so hot in impulse

and in appetite? Or, why hast Thou placed me thus? under influences so strong, so resistless, and in my case all for evil? Where, in short, is he, who, when he has fallen, throws himself on his face before God, takes all the blame, confesses his own wickedness and his own desert of punishment, and cries aloud for mercy to One whom he cannot make his debtor? May it not be said of that man, that, 'though he fall, he shall not be cast away?'"

We cannot resist yet another. In "The Gospel of the Flood" (page 146), after describing the covenant made with Noah after the subsidence of the waters, the preacher proceeds to say :—

"And now a fresh start is given to the human being. Warned, and solemnized, and comforted, he is set again to his task, of being God's representative to his lower creation, God's king and God's priest upon the earth given back to him. Who has not had occasion to thank God for such an opportunity, on a humbler scale, in his own little life? When, as children, we have been brought to a due sense of some childish transgression; when we have been made at last to feel that we were in fault, and a parent's forgiveness has set its seal to a parent's correction, and we are taken back into favour, tried again and trusted, loved again and loving, to be as before and to do (we hope) better; who does not look back upon such a moment as one of the purest and tenderest of all his recollections, a very token and glimpse and foretaste of heaven? Such was the mercy shown in the history before us. Alas! how soon to be overcast! how soon to be disappointed, forgotten, and sinned away! O these fresh starts, so often vouchsafed to us; these opportunities of beginning anew and of perfecting reformation; how vain, how profitless, how condemning! even like that departure, from his home in the soul, of the evil spirit, to be followed, after brief pause and respite, by a return in sevenfold force to the merely 'swept and garnished' dwelling! The mercy is God's: the loss is ours!"

MATHEMATICUS, M.A.,  
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## Biblical Criticism.

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*Subject: ST. PAULS INFIRMITY IN THE FLESH.*

**I**n the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (xii. 7) St. Paul, after speaking of the abundant revelations vouchsafed to him, adds that "a thorn" or rather "a stake" was "given him in his flesh, a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him" and thus to check the growth of spiritual pride. In the Epistle to the Galatians again (iv. 13, 14) he reminds his converts how he had "preached to them through infirmity of the flesh," commending them at the same time because they "did not despise nor loathe their tempta-

tion in his flesh, but received him as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus."

In the latter passage there is a variation of reading, which has some bearing on the interpretation. For "*my* temptation," which stands in the received text, the correct reading seems certainly to be "*your* temptation," as I have quoted it.\*

These passages so closely resemble each other, that it is not unnatural to suppose the allusion to be the same in both. If so, the subject seems to have been especially present to St. Paul's thoughts at the season when these two Epistles were written; for they were written about the same time.

What, then, was this "stake in the flesh," this "infirmity of the flesh," which made so deep an impression on his mind?

Diverse answers have been given to this question,† shaped in many instances by the circumstances of the interpreters themselves, who saw in the apostle's temptation a more or less perfect reflection of the trials which beset their own lives. How far such subjective feelings have influenced the progress of interpretation, will appear from the following list of conjectures, which I have thrown into a rough chronological order.

1. It was some bodily ailment. This, which is the natural account of the incident, is also the first in point of time. A very early tradition defined the complaint; "*per dolorem, ut aiunt, auriculæ vel capitis*," says Tertullian, *de Public* section 13. And this statement is copied or confirmed by Jerome (*Gal. l. c.*), "*Tradunt eum gravissimum capitis dolorem sæpe perpeßum*." The headache is mentioned also by Pelagius and Primasius (both on 2 Cor. *l. c.*). Others seem to have followed a different tradition as the complaint in question;‡ but in some form or

\* Of the three readings, τὸν πειρασμὸν μου τὸν ἐν, τὸν πειρασμὸν τὸν ἐν (omitting μου), and τὸν πειρασμὸν ἡμῶν ἐν (omitting τὸν), I have no hesitation in preferring the last; for (1) it is the most difficult of the three; (2) it accounts for the remaining two; and (3) it has far higher support than the others in the ancient copies. To the authorities in its favour given by Tischendorf, already sufficient perhaps to decide the question, must be added S, not then discovered, and Eusebius of Emesa (in Cramer's *Catena*), apparently overlooked by this editor.

† A long list of references to writers who have discussed this question is given in Wolf, *Cur. Philol.*, on 2 Cor. xii. 7. I have to acknowledge my obligations chiefly to Calov. *Bibl. Illustr.*, on 2 Cor. *l. c.*, and Stanley's *Corinthians*, p. 563 sqq. (2nd. ed.). I have had no opportunity of using Bertholdt, *Opusc.* 134 sqq., to which I find frequent references in recent commentaries.

‡ An ancient writer (Cotel. *Mon. Eccles.* i. p. 252) says, τριχῶν ἐποίησά-μεθα τὴν ἀφαίρεσιν· συναφέλωμεν αὐταῖς καὶ τοὺς ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ σκόλοπας· κομάσαντες γὰρ οὗτοι ἐπιπλέον ἡμᾶς ὀδυνῶσι· τὸ μὲν γὰρ τρίχωμα ἡμῶν ὃν ὁ κατὰ τὸν βίον κόσμος, τιμαὶ, δόξαι, χρημάτων κτήσεις, κ.τ.λ., on which the

other *illness* was the solution which suggested itself to the earliest writers. This appears to be the idea of Irenæus, the first writer who alludes to the subject, and of Victorinus, the first extant commentator on the Epistle to the Galatians.\*.

J. B. LIGHTFOOT D.D.

(To be continued.)

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### ANCESTRAL EXPERIENCE A DIVINE SCHOOLMASTER.

"I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom."—Job xxxii. 7.

No creature perhaps in the universe is so dependent on teaching as man. He comes into the world with a mind that is a blank; he requires to be taught how to use his limbs and gain his livelihood; how to work his mental faculties and moral powers, and how to act in relation to man and God to this life and the life to come. The great Father has vouchsafed to him many teachers—the light of nature,

the light of his own reason and experience, and to some the light of the Bible. Amongst his best schoolmasters, however, is the experience of his ancestors. He is not merely left to his own experience to be taught, but he is furnished with lessons from the experience of men that are gone.

Ancestral experience as a teacher reminds us of two things.

I. A DISTINGUISHING FACULTY IN HUMAN NATURE. Of all the creatures on this earth man alone has the power of deriving instruction from the experience of others. We have no reason

editor (p. 756) absurdly enough remarks, "*ex toto contextu suspicari datur a nostro per σκόλοπα animalcula quæ caput pungunt intellecta esse.*" The context, if I mistake not, fails to bear out this remark, but Cotelier's conjectural interpretation is treated as a fact by recent writers, and so this is added to the list of traditional accounts of St. Paul's complaint. The list is still further swelled by understanding of St. Paul the maladies which Nicetas attributes to Gregory Nazianzen. Aquinas mentions the opinion, "*quod fuit vehementer afflictus dolore iliaco*" (colic), but I have not noticed it in any earlier writer. On the whole, the tradition of the headache (*κεφαλαλγία*) is fairly constant.

\* Iren. v. 3. 1, but his language is obscure. Victorinus says, "*infirmus carne,*" but this again is not free from ambiguity.

to believe that the birds of heaven or the beasts of the field derive one particle of information from any of their ancestors through the ages that are gone ; but man learns from men and women who lived centuries ago.

First : *This faculty connects all generations together in a mental unity.* The instruction we derive from the thoughts, the inventions, the discoveries, the virtues and the vices, the sorrows and the joys of the millions that are gone, gives us a vital connection with them. Our natures quiver with thoughts and emotions that animated the dust of departed generations. We feel that there is a mystic and undying nerve that binds our souls to them.

Secondly : *This faculty explains the gradual advancement of the world in intelligence.* Why is this age in general information and scientific attainment, in social and political institutions, and in the arts of civilised life, in advance of any of its predecessors ? Simply because it is benefited by the accumulated experience of the past. Every age builds up a fresh layer of general intelligence on which the next steps up and works, and thus the generations are ever climbing the hill of knowledge.

Thirdly : *This faculty increases the moral responsibility of the world.* "On us the ends of ages are come." The accu-

mulated treasures of the past are ours. On no previous age for this reason did there rest such a responsibility as on this.\*

Ancestral experience as a teacher reminds us of—

II. A SAD PERVERSITY IN HUMAN NATURE. In secular matters we are constantly learning from the experience of our ancestors. We avail ourselves of their discoveries, we take warnings from their mistakes in commerce, architecture, navigation, government, and arms. But in moral and spiritual matters we are slow to learn. Ancestral experience teaches us lessons on *spiritual* subjects not only in the general historical works of the world, but especially in the Bible. The Bible for the most part is a record of man's experience in relation to the higher and more solemn relations of being.

First : It shows us men *damned by sin*. We see on its pages men following vanity, lust, avarice, ambition, falsehood, fraud, violence, and impiety, and sinking into misery as the accursed of God. Yet men continue to pursue the same wicked course. They see men drinking of a certain poisonous cup, and dying in anguish, and yet they take quaffs from that same cup they see men dash against the rock and go to

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\* See HOMILIST, vol. i., Editor's series, p. 92.



pieces, yet they run in the same direction.

Secondly : It shows us men *blessed by virtue*. Everywhere we see men who have done justice, loved mercy, and walked humbly with their God, living a noble life and attaining a splendid destiny ; yet men eschew that course. Men are ready enough in temporal matters to learn from their ancestors, but in spiritual concerns they are loath to give attention. How reluctant are children to take the experience of their parents in the highest things of life ! They follow their own course, and run the same circle of moral blunders in which their ancestors found their misery.

#### THE PAGANISM OF THE HEART.

“And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.”—Ezek. xx. 32.

THESE words were spoken by Ezekiel to his fellow exiles in Babylonian captivity. Away on the banks of the river Chebar he discovered in them a tendency to forget the One living and true God, and to settle down into Pagan life. Hence he addresses to them the text, “And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all,” &c. Our subject is the paganism of the heart, and the text leads us to look on it in two aspects—

I. AS AN EVIL TO WHICH THE GODLY ARE LIABLE. These

exiles were of the chosen tribes, they were the professed people of God, and yet their hearts tended pagan-ward. There is a tendency in all hearts, even in those who are converted, to Paganism. What is the essence of Paganism ? The text answers the question : “*To serve wood and stone ;*” practical materialism, a living for the senses and to self. Now there are several things that tend to bring this Paganism up into the mind even of the most thoughtful and religious.

First : The force of *early habits*. The spirit of self-indulgence and sensualism was the first spirit that animated us all. During the years previous to our conversion it obtained a strong root-hold there, and although the new moral spirit slew it with a mortal wound, it did not kill it. Its death requires time. Hence in unguarded moods it comes up again.

Secondly : The force of *social influence*. Although we live in nominal Christendom, the spirit of Paganism is dominant everywhere. In our industries, recreations, our literature and institutions, the spirit of Paganism breathes in all, and it tends to possess us of itself. You need not send missionaries abroad to fight with Paganism, it abounds in England under the garb of Christian Theism.

Thirdly : The force of *Satanic agency*. “The prince of

the power of the air "is ever at work around us, and his aim is to foster all the remaining elements of depravity in the heart. Thus it is that there is a liability in the hearts even of the regenerate "to serve wood and stone." To try for happiness in materialism. "Wood and stone" govern depraved souls everywhere. The devil's great wish is that men should endeavour to get their "bread" — their happiness — out of "stones." Our subject leads us to look on the Paganism of the heart—

II. AS AN EVIL AGAINST WHICH THE GODLY SHOULD STRUGGLE. Here is the injunction: "And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen." A complete deliverance from this spirit will ultimately come to the good. How?

First: By the *growth of heavenly sentiments*. The more our virtues multiply and grow within us, the more power they will get to rid us of all evil, to crush every vestige of Paganism.

Secondly: By *closer fellowship with the Divine*. The nearer we live to God the closer our communion with His truth, His holy Son, and blessed Spirit, the more we shall rise above all that is worldly and material.

Thirdly: By a *moral conquest over spiritual foes*. We have "to wrestle against prin-

cialities and powers," and when, by God's grace, we shall have trodden Satan under our feet, we shall be freed for ever of all evil.

Fourthly: By a *translation into the heavenly world*. At death we shall be delivered from all evil tendencies; and then "that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all that ye say, We will be as the heathen," &c.

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#### DEATH A SENTENCE.

"We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead."—2 Cor. i. 9.

THE apostle hererefers to some particular event in his life. Whether that event was the danger to which he was exposed at Ephesus (Acts ix. 25), or at Lystra, it is impossible to determine with certainty. It was, undoubtedly, some afflictive event that made him feel that death was very near him. He felt sentenced to death. The words have a universal application, and we shall use them as such. They lead us to regard death—

I. AS A SENTENCE. "The sentence of death." The sentence of death is

First: *Universal*. Every man is under it. "It is appointed unto men once to die." All live under the dark sentence of death.

Secondly: The sentence is *just*. Whether the dissolution

of the body would have taken place had man sinned or not, one thing is clear—that the form in which it appears to him is everywhere regarded as the penalty of sin; and man's own conscience, moreover, attests its justice. The sentence—

Thirdly: *Is irrevocable.* Throughout the whole history of the race there are only two exemptions from death recorded. It matters not how pure the character, how useful the life, the sentence stands unrevoked and unrevokable. Death, then, is a sentence, universal, just, irrevocable. The text leads us to regard death

II. As a sentence IN MAN. "We have the sentence of death in ourselves."

First: *The sentence of death is in man's body.* It is born with him, and it continues to work within until the organization falls back to its original dust. It works with every heaving breath and beating pulse. "The moment we begin to live we all begin to die."

Secondly: *The sentence of death is in man's mind.* There it dwells as a dark thought spreading a gloom over the whole of his life. It haunts the memory, it terrifies the conscience. It is in us, we cannot get rid of it. No science can expel it from the body, no reason can argue it from the soul. The text leads us to regard death

III. As a sentence in man

for USEFUL ENDS. What are the spiritual uses it is designed to answer?

First: *Nontrust in self.* "Not trust in ourselves." There is a self-reliance that is a duty and an excellence. But there is a self-confidence that is sinful and ruinous, and man everywhere is fearfully liable to this. Now the sentence of death tends to check this. It makes man feel his frailty, his utter insufficiency to preserve his own existence, his absolute dependence upon God. Human pride and arrogance would soon turn the world into pandemonium were it not for death. Thank God for death; it keeps down the arrogant spirit of humanity.

Secondly: *Devout trust in God.* "But in God that raiseth the dead." Man's well-being is essentially dependant upon trust in God. Under its influence alone the soul can get true strength and satisfaction.

CONCLUSION.—Let the working of death within us and around us, lead us to "trust in him that liveth for ever."

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#### SKETCHES FROM GENESIS (XIII.)

##### HAGAR AND ISHMAEL IN DISTRESS.

"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, (putting it on her shoulder,) and the child, and sent her away," &c.—Gen. xxi. 14—21.

I THINK that there are two truths very clearly taught us in this narrative.

I. THAT HUMAN LIFE IS HIGHLY ESTIMATED IN HEAVEN. Not a few treat life as a plaything, its value not rightly estimated by them; the slave owners looked at it solely from a mercantile point of view—a thing to be purchased and sold. Those who waste away their time in indolence and sin do not realize the sacredness of life. God looks upon it as a sacred thing, and gave commandments that it should not be wilfully destroyed. In this, the same as in many other instances, the divine and human standards differ.

1. *It is not valued according to the locality in which it is placed.* Hagar had been driven from Abraham's house, no longer under the protection of the one whom God had promised to bless, but a poor wanderer in the wilderness, houseless and destitute. Some people attach great importance to life if it be connected with mansions and palaces: there are certain localities in London and in other large towns where the rich would never dream of dwelling, because their dignity would be lowered in the estimation of their acquaintances. The true value of life is independent of localities; God hears the cry of suffering and distress from the wilderness as soon as from the palace.

2. *It is not judged according to social standing.* A bondswoman, and bondswoman driven from her master's house,

had no social standing whereby she could expect aid and assistance; still God hears her cry. Social standing is a great element in human society, and is much thought of by many; the people of India suffer greatly owing to caste: this has not disappeared from our country, with all our boast of freedom and equality; the Gospel has not penetrated the heart of society deep enough yet to convince them that the life of the poor is as valuable as that of the wealthy. The cross has demolished all distinctions, and all come from the same origin, "God hath made of our blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." As such He cares for all, whatever their position in society may be.

3. *It is not judged according to the human standard of usefulness.* Hagar and her son had been sent from the place where they might be useful, now in the wilderness, what could be accomplished by them? *Man* would reply, "nothing; it is life thrown away." But God thought otherwise, and His purpose was, that that lad should be the head of a numerous and powerful nation. It is no wonder that we are at times grieved and pained, when unable to perceive the object and the usefulness of certain dispensations, because our standard of usefulness is not the same as God's.

II. THAT SUPERNATURAL.

POWER IS MANIFESTED, SUSTAINING AND SUPPORTING LIFE.

1. *At times this power seems to come unexpectedly.* The preservation of life in this instance was not in accordance with the general rule; it was an exception; so that the supernatural appears more distinctly than in the ordinary events of Providence. The unexpectedness of this voice from heaven, and the showing of the well, must have filled their hearts with gratitude to God: unexpected recoveries from illness, sudden, miraculous escapes from death, and such things, direct our attention to the fact that we are indebted to God for our life, and not to any exertions of our own.

2. *It is manifested when all earthly resources fail.* "And the water was spent in the bottle." Man's resources to support life are soon exhausted; the agriculturist can prepare the earth, and cast in the seed; when that is done, all that man can work in connection with

the forthcoming crop has been accomplished: it is God that giveth the increase. It is when He sends forth His spirit that the face of the earth is renewed.

3. *This supernatural power is generally exerted in conjunction with human efforts.* "Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink." She had to go to the well, the water did not come to her; God does *His* work, and we must do our own; all that we have to do is to do the right, leaving the results in God's hands.

Conclusion: *The higher our estimate of life, the greater glory we give to the Author of life.* If the natural life be so valuable in the sight of heaven, how much more so is that life which is the fruit of the Son's death?

Uckfield.

CYMRÖ.

## Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCLXVII.)

LIFE PROSPEROUS AND PERILOUS.

"By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life. Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them."—Prov. xxii. 4, 5.

THESE two verses present to us

human life in this world in two phases, a prosperous and a perilous phase.

I. A PROSPEROUS PHASE.

"By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life."



First: Here are the *elements* of a prosperous life. What are they? (1.) Humility. What is humility? Not *weakness*. There are those who are sometimes considered humble who are too infertile in nature to grow ambition. They have just power enough to crawl, they have no wings to fly. Not *servility*. There are those who are destitute of self-respect, who are mean and cringing in their instincts and habits, like Uriah Heep in "David Copperfield." Not *sanctimoniousness*. There is a deal of mock humility both in the world and in the churches: humble speeches throbbing with pride; humble dresses covering hearts beating with vanity and ambition. The poet says

"There are some that use  
Humility to serve their pride, and seem  
Humble upon their way, to be prouder  
At their wish'd journey's end."

The following anecdote was given by Robert Newton, the celebrated Wesleyan preacher. "An instance of this (false humility) was lately mentioned to me by the Deacon of a Christian Church. One of the members was indulging freely in this strain; 'What a poor short-coming creature I am!' This minister sighed and said, 'Indeed you have long given me painful reason to believe you.' Whereupon the member, being taken at his word, replied in a tone of anger, 'Who told you anything about me? I am as good as you. I will not come to hear you any more; I will go somewhere else.' And so he did." For examples of true humility from Scripture see below.\* (2.) Reverence.

"Fear of the Lord." The word "fear" here is not to be interpreted as representing a particle of the slavish and the servile: there is no terror or alarm in it. It is the fear of love. If there be aught of dread in it, it is the dread not of suffering but of wrong. The expression means godliness. The two things, humility and the fear of the Lord, are indissolubly associated. "A little boy was tempted to pluck some cherries from a tree which his father had forbidden him to touch. 'You need not be afraid,' said his evil companion, 'for if your father should find out that you have taken them, he is too kind to hurt you.' 'Ah,' said the brave little fellow, 'that is the very reason why I would not touch them: for though my father would not hurt me, yet I should hurt him by my disobedience.'"

Secondly: Here are the characteristics of a prosperous life. What is the prosperity? (1.) Wealth, "Riches." Sometimes secular riches attend religion. "Godliness is profitable unto all things." But these riches are of the lowest kind: the real riches, the wealth of holy thoughts, lofty sentiments, high hopes, are ever connected with genuine religion. (2.) Dignity, "Honour." True spiritual excellence will always command the honour and confidence of all consciences both in this world and the world to come. It receives honour even from God. (3.) Life. Not mere ex-

\* Abraham (Gen. xviii. 27); Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 10); Moses (Exod. iii. 2, iv. 10); Joshua (Jos. vii. 6); Gideon (Jud. vi. 15); David (1 Chron. xxix. 14); Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 26); Manasseh (2 Chron.

xxxiii. 12); Josiah (2 Chron. xxxiv. 27); Job (Job xl. 4, xliii. 6); Isaiah (Isa. vi. 5); Jeremiah (Jer. i. 6); John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 14); Centurion (Matt. viii. 8); Woman of Canaan (Matt. xv. 27); Elizabeth (Luke i. 43); Peter (Luke v. 8); Paul (Acts xx. 19).

istence, but existence in its highest and happiest developments. Existence in connection with all that can make it valuable and blessed. Such is a prosperous life. Wealth, honour, and life, growing out of humility and the fear of the Lord.

II. A PERILOUS phase. "Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward." Observe three things.

First: The perils of life *described*. "Thorns and snares." There are lives vexed, fretted, wounded, lives of entanglements, and risks, lives, in fact, in which men seem to be walking every step on prickling thorns beneath which lie hid serpents, precipices, and ravenous beasts of prey. Life to some men is nothing but pains and perplexities.

Secondly: The perils of life *incurred*. Who are the men exposed to these perils of life? The text answers the question. "Thorns and snares are in the way of the *froward*." The "*froward*" man stands in contrast to the man of humility and the "fear of the Lord." He is the man of unbridled will, stubborn, and headstrong. Self-willed stubbornness has always led men into perplexities. Sarah, Jacob and Balaam found the way of stubbornness full of "thorns and snares," pains and perplexities. What a wretched destiny is that of a sinner: his footway is distressing, his end is ruinous.

Thirdly: The perils of life *avoided*. "He that doth keep his soul shall be far from them." The word "them" may refer either to the "*froward*" character or to the "thorns and snares." Either sense gives the idea that the man who keeps his soul, keeps it in humility in

the "fear of the Lord," keeps it in holy fellowship and love, will avoid the perils to which the wicked are exposed.

CONCLUSION: What a solemn yet glorious thing is life!

"'Tis not for man to trifle! Life is brief,  
And sin is here.  
Our age is but the falling of a leaf,  
A dropping tear:  
We have no time to sport away the hours;  
All must be earnest in a world like ours.

"Not many lives, but only one have we—  
One, only one!  
How sacred should that one life ever be,  
That narrow span!  
Day after day filled up with blessed toil,  
Hour after hour still bringing in new  
spoil."  
DR. BONAR.

## (No. CCLXVIII.)

### CHILD-TRAINING.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."—Prov. xxii. 6.

THERE are four important subjects implied in this verse.

I. THE SPECIAL TRAINABILITY OF CHILDHOOD. "Train up a child." What is training? Not mere teaching. A child may be taught the art of reading and writing, and the elements of general knowledge, and yet be untrained. Instruction is one thing, education is another. There are many well instructed who are miserably educated, who are in fact not educated at all. Training and education mean the developement of the intellectual and moral powers of the soul, the bringing out into right and vigorous action the germinant elements of the mind and heart. Now childhood is the special period for this. If you turn the river into a new direction, do not wait until it approaches the Ocean and the waters become a volume of resistless force. Begin as near to the fountain head as

possible. If you train a tree do not wait until its trunk has grown stiff and bulky with years. Begin when it is in a sapling stage. If you train a horse, you must begin with the colt. Youth is the period for training. Indeed all life is trained in youth, and children are trained, either rightly or wrongly, a process of training is going on. The soul is ever running into hideous crookedness and deformity or into stately forms of strength. It is not a question with parents and guardians whether those committed to their charge shall be educated or not, educated they will be in some form or other.

Another subject implied in this verse is—

II. THE RIGHTEOUS PATH OF LIFE. "In the way which he should go." Not in the way in which a child *would* go. That would in all probability be in most cases a false and wicked way, the way of error and ruin. Not the way in which the world would have him go, the way of selfishness, carnality, &c. But in the way in which he *should* go. What is that way? The way of Christ. Christ is *the* way. He is the example. "Follow me" comprehends the totality of man's moral obligation. To follow Christ is to follow *truth, benevolence, happiness*. This is *the* way, the *only* way. Christ is the great example.

Another subject implied in this verse is—

III. THE TERRIBLE FORCE OF HABIT. "When he is old he will not depart from it." If the way in which the child has been trained, is evil when old he will not depart from it. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?" The statistics of conversions

show that but few bad men turn into the ways of rectitude and religion after forty years of age. The tree is too stiff, and too gnarled to bend, the river of influence has become too voluminous, too near the ocean to be turned in another direction at that period of life. But where the course has been right in youth, the improbability of a change we think is greatly increased. Conscience does not back the bad man in his habits however strong they become. Conscience, this divine faculty, is ever against him. But the good man in his habits is ever borne on by the whole might of his moral nature, and a conversion from goodness in old age grows almost into an impossibility.

Another subject implied in this verse is—

IV. THE SOLEMN ACCOUNTABILITY OF PARENTS. The great duty of training children devolves upon their parents. If they have not the capacity and the time to give the necessary amount of their personal attention to the work, they should use their best judgment in the employment of substitutes. The parent, in consequence of the moral power which he exerts upon the susceptible nature of his children, becomes almost as much the author of the character as he is the instrument of their existence. What, then, is the child mere passive entity, possessing no moral spontaneity, no resisting force? little if any, in the first stages of being. Must we in all cases of immorality and wickedness in children ascribe culpable neglect, if nothing worse, to parental conduct? We are bound to think so from such a passage as this. The great

philosopher Locke says "That of all the men we meet with nine parts out of ten are what they are, good or bad, useful or not, according to their education."

CONCLUSION. — The subject presents—First: *A lesson to the young.* Let the young avoid the wrong and cultivate those habits that are in accordance with morality and religion.

Second: *A warning to the guardians of youth.* Let parents, Sunday-school teachers, public instructors, and statesmen look well to the young generation. If parents would certainly know that their little child would, in the course of seven or eight years, fall into a deep river alone, would they wait until that catastrophe occurred before they taught him to swim? In the course of that period the infants now born will be thrown into the great social river of depravity and corruption; and should they not, in the earliest stages, be taught the moral art of keeping the current beneath them, and making it bear them to scenes of safety and peace.

"Oh, for the coming of that glorious time,  
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth.

And best protection, this imperial realm,  
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
An obligation, on her part, to *teach*  
Them who are born to serve her and obey;  
Binding herself, by statute, to secure  
For all the children whom her soul maintains,

The rudiments of letters, and inform  
The mind with moral and religious truth,  
Both understood and practised—so that  
none,

However destitute, be left to droop,  
By timely culture unsustained, or run  
Into a wild disorder; or be forced  
To drudge through a weary life without  
the help

Of intellectual implements and tools;  
A savage horde among the civilized,  
A servile band among the lordly free."

WORDSWORTH.

## (CCLXIX.)

### THE SOCIAL RULE OF WEALTH.

"The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."—Prov. xxii. 7.

WEALTH not only invests its possessor with the power to gratify his appetites, tastes and ambition, to cultivate his intellect and to furnish his mind with stores of choicest knowledge, to ameliorate human woe and to promote general happiness; but invests him at the same time with a *regal* influence. A wealthy man is the king of his dependants. Indeed, wealth rules commerce, and commerce rules the parliaments of the world.

In relation to this subject we offer three remarks.

I. That this rule should ALWAYS be a GENEROUS rule. When we see a wealthy man loved, honoured, and loyally served because of the benefits that he has conferred upon man, his sovereignty is a matter for rejoicing. Such was the sovereignty which Job, in the days of his prosperity, enjoyed. "The young men saw me and hid themselves: and the aged arose and stood up. The princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth. The nobles held their peace, and their tongues cleaved to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me. Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him."

In relation to this subject, we remark that—

II. This rule is FREQUENTLY a TYRANNIC rule. To how many rich men of all ages do the thundering denunciations of St.



James apply, "Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." How often does the wealthy master exercise tyranny over his servants, the wealthy landlord over his tenants, the wealthy merchant over his customers, the wealthy nation over poorer countries. The rule of wealth is oft tyrannic.

In relation to this subject we remark

III. That this rule is EVER a TEMPORARY rule. There is an empire which a man may establish here over his fellows that might be permanent and ever extending; the empire of superior thoughts, purer sympathies, divine aims and deeds. By these men may become kings for ever under God. But the reign of mere wealth is always uncertain, and at most very brief. Riches lose their power the moment its possessor dies. The rich man's crown falls from his head, and his sceptre from his hand, with his last breath.

CONCLUSION.—From this subject we are reminded,

First: *Of the responsibility of the rich.* How great the power of wealth! In this world it is a talent often more influential than intellect or genius. Every man is responsible to God for all the good his wealth is capable of accomplishing.

We are reminded,

Secondly: *The temptation of the poor.* What is the temptation? To become servile, cringing in spirit. Flunkeyism is the greatest curse of the people. It is a cancer in the heart of England. The men that bow down to wealth are in the majority everywhere, and they are parasites that devour the moral nobleness of nations. From this subject we are reminded,

Thirdly: *The wisdom of the diligent.* The diligent man is a wise man. Why? Because the more industrious he is, the more independent he becomes of wealthy men. Though he may bow at first, and thus become for a time a servant, he will soon by assiduous labour pay back his loan, and stand erect before his own master as an independent man.

"Thy spirit, independence, let me share,  
Lord of the lion-heart and eagle eye;  
Thy steps I follow with my bosom bare,  
Nor heed the storm that howls along  
the sky."

SMOLLETT.



## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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**THE CREATOR AND THE CREATION—HOW RELATED.** By JOHN YOUNG, LL.D.  
London: Strahan and Co., 56, Ludgate Hill.

WE are always glad to receive works from the able pen of Dr. Young. He generally selects for discussion subjects of grand and vital moment, and brings to his work a mind richly furnished, thoroughly Catholic, and singularly gifted with keenness of vision and power of thought. This work has been before the public for thirteen years. It has passed through successive editions and also through great changes; indeed, the author informs us this is virtually a new work in execution, and, above all, in spirit and aim. Sir William Hamilton, the highest human authority on such discussions, thus wrote to the author on the appearance of the first edition of the work:—"I have read this book with great interest, and much admire the ability with which the subject is treated. There are, indeed, some difficulties which, to my mind, have never been solved; perhaps they are insoluble. But, with the exception of these, your work seems to me one of the best and most satisfactory which have appeared upon the subject." We recommend this able work, not only on account of the magnificent thoughts which it contains, but because a consecutive reading of this work will prove most quickening and invigorating to the faculties.

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**MEN OF FAITH: OR, SKETCHES FROM THE BOOK OF JUDGES.** By LUKE H. WISEMAN, M.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

"THE design contemplated in this book," says the author, "may be described as threefold. In the first place, I have endeavoured to present a general view of that important period in the history of the Hebrew people, intervening between the death of Joshua and the anointing of their first king, during which, to use the language of St. Stephen, 'the Lord gave them judges.' Then, selecting the four most eminent persons whom the sacred narrative presents to our view during that period—Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson, men who are specially mentioned by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews as men of faith—the result of careful study of the history of each of them—are submitted to the reader. Lastly, I have wished to render the whole subservient to purposes of edification, and have therefore introduced practical remarks and reflections." Perhaps there is no book of the sacred volume less studied than

the Book of Judges. The subjects, therefore, of this volume will be fresh to a large number even of Bible readers. The pieces of biography here given are deeply interesting and suggestive; the author has drawn from them lessons of universal application and importance, and presented them in a philosophic order, with vigorous thinking and manly rhetoric.

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**THE MORNINGTON LECTURE:** Thursday Evening. Addresses by **THOMAS T. LYNCH.** London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

WHATEVER falls from the pen of Mr. Lynch will be prized by thoughtful men. He is a man of rare ability and high culture—a man to whom it is given to see and reveal the highest things. The following is the author's idea of Congregationalism, an idea we think not far short of the truth. "Congregationalism reminds me of what the naturalists sometimes talk about, and a queer thing it is. There is a composite creature called the king rat. I have never seen one, but it is to be seen in certain museums. It appears that rats, which are very fraternal creatures, after a fashion, associate with one another in such a way that their tails get fastened together, and there are sometimes as many as twenty rats making up one king rat. Their heads are all stretched outwards in a circle, and their tails all compacted and agglutinated together, nobody exactly knows how. Congregationalism is very much like that. All the tails are agglutinated together: it is a compound creature, the heads all outward, ready to run different ways, the tails amalgamated in this queer fashion, so that no individual can move freely, and neighbours hamper instead of helping one another. Behold in figure a Congregational Union!" We heartily recommend this volume, abounding with striking and original thoughts.

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**FEATHERS FOR ARROWS: OR, ILLUSTRATIONS FOR PREACHERS AND TEACHERS.**  
By **C. H. SPURGEON.** London: Passmore and Alabaster, 18, Paternoster Row.

It has been said that able men are generally lazy. Mr. Spurgeon's history is a contradiction to this. He is one of the most indefatigable labourers we have. The object of this book is good, and the title is happy. Although some of the selections are not, to our mind, the most unexceptionable, we can heartily recommend the work as a whole. It contains many "feathers," adapted to carry the arrow of divine truth to the hearts of "hearers of the word."

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#### SEPARATE SERMONS AND LECTURES.

**THE SECRET OF POWER.** A Sermon. By **ALEXANDER MACLAREN.** London: John Snow and Co., 2, Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row. A sermon far above the average of those preached on such occasions.—**LIBERTY IN ITS RELATION TO CHRIST.** By **JOSHUA C. HARRISON.** London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row. A very thoughtful discourse, remarkably free from the pedantry which has hitherto often characterized the addresses of the chair of the Congregational Union.—**THE KEYS OF HEAVEN:** the

Lord's Words and the Pope's Pretensions. A Sermon by a Lay Preacher. London: Jarrold and Sons, 12, Paternoster Row. A sermon worth reading.—A FUNERAL SERMON ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF MRS. GASKIN. By Rev. WILLIAM CORNFORTH. Birmingham: Hall and English. Serious thoughts befitting the occasion.—THE FATHER OF RAILWAYS, OR A HERO FROM HUMBLE LIFE. A Lecture, by Rev. John Stokoe. London: Elliot Stock. An admirable lecture. The thinking, the spirit, and expression, are alike admirable.—THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN. By EDWARD DENNETT. London: Elliot Stock. An exposure of one of the most sectarian of all the religious sects in England—a pernicious people.—EXEMPLARY DISCOURSES OF GREAT ENGLISH PREACHERS IN THE TIME OF WICKLIFFE. London: W. Wesley, 81, Fleet Street. The sermon here of the celebrated Tyndall is a gem of its kind.

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#### PAMPHLETS, &c.

A REPLY TO THE PAMPHLET OF REV. U. G. CLARK, M.A., entitled the dangers of the Church of England. By REV. CHARLES HEBERT, M.A. London: Macmillan and Co. This reply is admirable in spirit as well as able in expression. With the author's concluding paragraph we have the profoundest sympathy. "That a truly free national church, with a perfected English Bible, may be the brightest jewel in the wondrous favours of God to my native land, is the highest scope of my patriotism and of my prayers." If our bishops were men understanding the times they would make the Church wide enough to embrace the best of our nonconformist ministers.—THE PRIMITIVE MODE OF MAKING BISHOPS. By JOHN HARRISON. London: Longmans and Green. A work that will prove interesting to the ecclesiastical antiquarian.—SHALL I LIVE FOR EVER? By WILLIAM BARKER. London: Elliot Stock.—REV. G. MINTON RIGHT, ON THE QUESTION OF ENDLESS MISERIES. By HENRY SMITH WARLEIGH. London: Elliot Stock. We cannot go into this controversy. All we can say is, that both these pamphlets are worth reading. We cannot help saying, however, that the *annihilation* theory appears to us most repugnant to philosophy and derogatory to God.—PHARISAISM AND SELF-SACRIFICE. By ANDREW JUKES. London: Morgan and Chase, 38, Ludgate Hill. This contains many good and wholesome remarks.—PAPERS ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH. By an English Presbyterian, Nos. I. to VI. London: William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row. This is a controversial work. It is learned and elaborate, but not sufficiently interesting to us to attempt a perusal.

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#### SERIALS.

THE FOOD JOURNAL: A Review of Social and Sanitary Economy. Parts I. to V. London: J. M. Johnson and Sons, 3, Castle Street, Holborn. We heartily welcome this journal as a most valuable addition to our monthly literature. It discusses subjects vital to the physical and social welfare of humanity. We wish for it a large circulation.—THE BIBLE STU-

DENT: A Monthly Magazine. London: Hodder and Stoughton. There are so many works of this kind that we should think there is scarcely a place for it; then the articles, too, in this number are too heavy to enable it to float.—THE CHRISTIAN: Four parts: London: Morgan and Chase, 38, Ludgate Hill. We cannot say that we adopt its theory of religious revivalism. It seems to us too much like a revival of sensual feeling and personal selfishness. At the same time, the serial has sufficient merit to claim for it a large circulation.—THE POETICAL MAGAZINE: Parts I and II. London: Simpkin and Marshall, Stationers' Hall Court. The idea of this magazine is excellent; it offers a fine opportunity for young poets to cultivate their genius and to reveal their creations. It is a magazine intended to call forth the young Shakespeares, Miltons, and Tennysons of the age. We believe there are such, and some of the contributions before us incline us to the belief.

#### LIST OF BOOKS TO BE NOTICED IN OUR NEXT NUMBER.

Five Years in Damascus. By J. L. Porter, D.D., LL.D.—Jesus Christ the Centre.—The History of Methodism. By Abel Stevens, LL.D.—Romance of Modern Missions. By Miss Brightwell.—The Life of Samuel Bradburn. By Thomas W. Blanshard.—Life Problems Answered in Christ. By Leigh Mann.—A Rhymed Harmony of the Gospels. By Francis Barham and Isaac Pitman.—Christian Revelation. By Thomas Chalmers, D.D.—Kardoo, the Hindoo Girl. By a Zenana Missionary.—The Keepsake Scripture Text Book. With a preface by the Rev. J. C. Ryle.—The Pattern Prayer. By Rev. Francis Bourdillon, M.A.—Psalms, Hymns, and Anthems. By Samuel Smith.—Words in Season. By Henry B. Browning, M.A.—A Critical English New Testament.—The Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, regarded from a Layman's Point of View. By Daniel Biddle.—Faith's Jewels presented in Verse, with other Devout Verses. Edited by Lord Kinloch.—Religious Thought in England. From the Reformation to the End of Last Century. By Rev. John Hunt, M.A.

### Church News.

EPISCOPAL.—Bishop McIlvaine, of the American Episcopal Church, has arrived in London. The new church of Holy Trinity, at Richmond, has been consecrated by the Bishop of Winchester. It cost about £7,000, and the donor of the site was the late Lord Justice Selwyn. The death of the Rev. J. B. Marsden, of Birmingham, is announced.

CONGREGATIONAL.—Rev. T. Wallace, of Whitfield's Tabernacle, Dursley, has resigned. Rev. S. Ranson, classical and Hebrew tutor in Hackney college, will terminate his engagement at the close of present session. Rev. J. Gordon, of Salem Chapel, Newton Abbot, is

about to resign. Rev. J. Mountain, of Great Marlow, Bucks, has resigned. Rev. J. Moss, of Silverstreet Chapel, Trowbridge, Wilts, has resigned; also Rev. R. Spence, of Dundee. The Rev. F. Given Wilson, of the new Congregational Church, Halstead, Essex, has expressed his intention to resign. The Rev. H. J. Haas, of the Independent Chapel at Walpole, Suffolk, is about to resign.

BAPTIST.—Rev. H. Beddow, Woodhaugh, Nottinghamshire, is about to resign. The Rev. Thomas Jones, of Chepstow, has resigned his stated ministry there, after a pastorate of thirty-seven years.



# A HOMILY

ON

## *Soul Pilgrimage.*

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EMBLEMS OF SOUL WORK.—No. IX.

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“Strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”—Heb. xi. 13.



MAN'S mortal life is a pilgrimage. Thus the Bible represents it. Jacob says, “The days of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years.” David says, “We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers.” Peter also addresses men as “strangers and pilgrims.” And truly our life here is a pilgrimage. We are con-

stantly moving onward—leaving old scenes and entering new ones. The circumstances that surrounded us yesterday are not the same as those that encircle us now; and into new ones we shall enter, if we live, to-morrow. We are not stationary a minute. The pilgrimage of life is in this respect peculiar. The ordinary traveller can often pause in his journey and even retrace his steps. Entranced with the landscape through which he is passing, he may resolve to tarry a time in its midst in order to revel in the beauties and drink in the poetry of the scene; or, remembering the grandeur of the scenery through which he



had passed, he may retrace his steps in order to have its divine impressions renewed within him. But not so in the pilgrimage of life: we can neither go back nor pause. Onward we are borne by a power as resistless as that which heaves the ocean and wheels the globe. Truly, this is not our rest. "Here we have no continuing city." There is a "house appointed for all living," and to which all living wend their way. Man, whatever his position in life, whatever his age, whatever he may be doing, is going to his long home. The whole of earth's population is on its march to the grave, and ere 1970 dawn on this globe, all will have reached the "land of darkness, where the light is as darkness without any order."

But I take the idea of pilgrimage now in order to illustrate the life of a *true soul* in this world. The life of such a soul is a pilgrimage in two respects: it involves a departure and a pursuit.

I. A DEPARTURE. A pilgrim is one that has left his old home, his early friends, familiar scenes, and ordinary avocations. Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, and as a pilgrim went forth not knowing whither. The Jews left Egypt, the scene of their nativity, and became pilgrims in the wilderness, sojourning in tents. What has a true soul left? It has departed from *a dominant materialism*. It once lived to the flesh and for the flesh. Its world was a world of animalism. It walked after the flesh, it judged after the flesh, its wisdom was fleshly. Its grand question was, "What shall I eat and what shall I drink?" The true soul has left this state; it has "been born of the Spirit," and *is* Spirit. Hence it minds "the things of the Spirit." It is in conscious and practical fellowship with the Invisible, with God, angels, and the spirits of "just men made perfect." It has departed from *controlling selfishness*. Self was the centre and circumference of all its activities. Society, the universe, God Himself, were nothing compared to self. It has now crucified self, and risen to the divine

life of disinterested love. It has departed from *practical atheism*. Once it lived without God. God was not in all its thoughts. But now through the ministry of truth it has been brought from its original home—brought out as God brought Abraham out of Ur, and the Jews out of Egypt. And now having come out into the sphere of the spirit of love and godliness, it feels that old things have passed away, and all things become new. Though it continues “in the world, it is not of the world.” It is translated from darkness into light, and from the power of Satan into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. It has new loves, new hopes, new fears, it is indeed a new creation in Christ Jesus. It has new motives of action—motives not derived from earth, but from heaven. The life which it lives in the flesh it lives by faith in Jesus Christ. New sources of joy. “Whom having not seen we love, and believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable, full of glory.” It glories in tribulation, knowing that “tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience,” &c. It has a new view of death. Instead of trembling before it as the messenger of terrors, it desires “to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” Soul pilgrimage involves—

II. A PURSUIT. A pilgrim not only leaves his old home, but is in pursuit of something better. Abraham left Ur in search of a “better country.” His seed left Egypt in search of Canaan. What is the true soul in pursuit of as its grand object? Not *holy places*. In all ages there have been superstitious and deluded men who have gone forth from their old homes in order to visit some shrine or sanctuary. Saint Jerome speaks of the practice of visiting Jerusalem as established ever since the discovery of our Saviour’s Cross by St. Helena, the mother of Constantine. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries pilgrims went forth from every part of the West to visit the sacred places in the Holy Land. In later days the Crusades were a pilgrimage of grim and savage grandeur. A true soul has no superstitious reverence for the relics of saints

or sacred shrines. All places are equally holy. The whole earth is a consecrated temple—for God is everywhere. Not *material wealth*. The Jews in the wilderness were pilgrims in pursuit of this. They were reaching forth to a land “flowing with milk and honey.” Whilst the true soul will not despise worldly wealth, but rightly estimate its worth, it will not labour for it as the chief good. Its supreme labour will not be to lay up treasures on earth, but treasures in heaven. Not *personal happiness*. Those who represent personal happiness as the great end for which a man should strive, and hold forth the blessedness of Heaven as the grand motive of life, commit, I am disposed to think, a terrible mistake. The Christian drawn by Bunyan is not the ideal painted by the Son of God. Bunyan’s Christian was in quest of happiness. For fear of hell and hope of heaven, he left his wife and children, and made his way with desperate earnestness towards the Celestial City. Alas! I fear that the character of modern Christians is formed more after the picture of the Bedford Dreamer than after the draft of the Divine Christ! He has distinctly taught us that “he that seeketh his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life shall find it.” And this is true to human experience. The man who seeks his own happiness will never get it. It is God’s law that happiness should come to man not by his seeking it as an end, but by seeking goodness as the great aim of life.

What, then, is the grand object pursued by a genuine Christian pilgrim? Godliness. We are to “follow on to know the Lord.” We are to “do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with our God.” We are “to press towards the mark of the prize of our high calling.” We are to “behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and thus be changed into the same image from glory to glory.”

CONCLUSION. Are you going forth on this true pilgrimage? Have you left the old scenes, the first home of your spirits? Have you come out from the darkness and the

bondage of the moral Egypt, and are you following the pillar of God's truth? Are you in quest of the Canaan of true spiritual goodness? Is the ideal of character held forth by the Son of God that to which you are reaching with an eager heart and an outstretched arm? If so, well. Don't be disheartened with the difficulties that beset your path, or by the enemies that assail you. March on. In this pilgrimage the difficulties lessen as you advance. The road will become smoother, the horizon brighter, and the scenery more enchanting as you move on. Thorns will give place to flowers, clouds to sunshine, the growl of enemies to the hearty welcome of friends. Onward, step onward, and you shall enter into the joy of your Lord.

I terminate this brief homily in the language of John Foster:—"The soul is not at home here; not at home in the body; not at home in the world: it must return to its Great Father, or be for ever miserable. What is to be done? Shall we try over and over again the things that have failed so often, or that are exhausted? Shall we redig the old home? Imagine an assembly of men who had tried the world, and were disappointed—that they meet, consult, compare, plan. (By the way, social assemblages of persons should be more generally of the nature of a council on the means of happiness.) Suppose that they do not despair yet. It is determined for each to try again, in such a manner as he may choose for a year, or a few years. They then re-assemble, tell, compare. One has been a wanderer, as many thousands of Englishmen at the present hour are: let him speak. One has frequented the deep scenes of sin: let him speak. Would not every mortal that heard him give him the lie if *he* pretended to have found happiness. One has pursued amusements: he speaks. Well, did they fully please at the time? In laughter was not the heart sad?—and then after, when the blaze was out and the smoke blown away, did happiness remain? One has sought gain, and found it: he speaks. If it be hoarded and worshipped as a god, how does it repay its worshipper? If it be expended,

is there nothing it cannot purchase? One has thrown out his affections in various social interests: he speaks. And did you find no selfishness, no fickleness, no coldness? One has been a retired, austere man. Well, and did no vexation presume to come to you in that state? The sum of their communications being heard, the question comes, 'Shall we try again?' 'No, no!' One might remark at last that all has not yet mentioned—There is the *hope of another life*: 'Arise and depart.'

"Let this grand thought shine on us always, like the sun: 'We are made for eternity.' Think so much of the future state as to seem almost to see it. Make it essential that our supreme purpose predominate over all the rest, and force them into submission, or abandon them: endeavour to mingle intimately the high and noble sentiments of religion and immortality with all other things. What is worth pursuing will mingle well with them. Let us place the evils of this life to the account of instruction rather than to that of disappointment and misery. Let us be certain, as our time passes away, we are actually advancing in our thoughts, feelings, habits, towards our grand destination.

"'Arise, exile; this is too far from the land of thy Father, the abode of thy friends, thy brothers.'

"'Arise, prisoner; what limits have bounded thy view! what fetters have repressed thy powers and restrained thy efforts! How hast thou been fixed in darkness and weakness! Behold thy fetters fall! the chain broken! the spirit from heaven to lead thee forth!'

"'Arise, patient sufferer; thou hast been willing to undergo anything for the eternal prize—adore the divine goodness all the while—now patience has had her perfect work. Leave all thy sorrows, and bring away all the results!'

"'Arise, weary traveller! Infirm in body, thou canst not answer to such a call. It is the spirit that is to answer. *That* can arise on wings of eagles—of angels.'"



# Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

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**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this **TEHILIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The **ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

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*Subject:* AN URGENT DEMAND AND AN EARNEST ENQUIRY.

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates;  
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;  
And the King of glory shall come in.  
Who is this King of glory?  
The Lord strong and mighty,  
The Lord mighty in battle.  
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;  
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;  
And the King of glory shall come in.  
Who is this King of glory?  
The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah.”

Psa. xxiv. 7—10.

**HISTORY.**—We must again refer the reader to preceding pages of the **HOMILIST** for remarks on the history of this Psalm.\*

**ANNOTATIONS.**—*Ver. 7.*—“Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors.” In some of the old ruins of castles in Palestine there are still to be seen deep grooves in the posts, showing that the door or gateway did not open or shut, but was drawn up or let down. Mr. Gadsby informs us that the castle Baniyas, in Syria, has the remains of a gate with grooves fitting in, to be drawn up and down like a blind.

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\* See **HOMILIST**, vol. i., Editor's series, p. 300.

(See "Land and the Book," by Thompson.) Indeed such gates seem to have been common in the castles erected in the Middle Ages. The tops of those gates were probably ornamented in such a way as to give the idea of heads. These words were supposed to have been uttered as the procession approached the city where the ark was to abide, and uttered as demanding the admission of the King of glory to a permanent residence on the Holy Mount. The gates and doors of this Acropolis are here personified. They are called everlasting on account of their antiquity, rather than on account of perpetuity.

*Ver. 8.*—"Who is this King of Glory?" The glorious king. The approaching procession gives out its summons to the ancient gates of the fortress of Jebus to exalt themselves for their new king, a mightier king than had ever entered before—Jehovah enthroned upon His ark, and going before their army in triumph to take possession. The warders demand in astonishment who this new king may be? This demand is answered first by a description of the new and more glorious title by which from that time forward God was known no longer as under the patriarchs Elohim, the strong ones; nor as under Moses, Jehovah the eternal: but Jehovah God of hosts, the hosts of battle, the hosts of heaven and earth. The change is important, and is brought prominently forward in the history. David brought up "the ark of God," whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts, that dwelleth between the cherubims. And he "blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts!" "This Psalm is the solemn inauguration of the new and great Name, thus wonderfully introduced for the first time."—(*The Four Friends.*) Dr. J. A. Alexander thinks that there is no need for supposing any such responses as are indicated above, and more fully represented in a preceding article.\* He regards it as an interrogatory style of oratory, like that practised by Demosthenes, and which more or less characterizes the composition of all very animated speakers who frequently ask questions for the purpose of returning the answers themselves. As if he had said, do you ask who this King of glory is? I'll tell you who He is. It is "the Lord strong and mighty," &c.

**ARGUMENT.**—We have already said that the whole Psalm contains three subjects. (1.) God's mundane property and man's moral obligation. (2.) The soul's cry and the true response. (3.) An urgent demand and an earnest enquiry. The third is the subject of these verses.

**HOMILETICS:** In these verses we have an urgent demand and a solemn enquiry.

**I. THE URGENT DEMAND.** This demand may be applied to three events.

First: *To the entrance of the ark into the Holy City.* This is

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\* See HOMILIST, vol. i., Editor's series, p. 300.

the literal application. (2 Sam. vi.; 1 Chron. xv.) As the procession approaches the entrance of the citadel, the demand is made for the gates to open. This demand was according to the will of God. It was His purpose that He should have a residence among His people. This demand was acceded to, the gates were thrown open, and for ages He continued there as the Theocratic King. It may be applied—

Secondly: *To the advent of Christ at His incarnation.* When Christ was born in Bethlehem, the demand was made to the world to make way for Him. His herald said, "Make straight in the desert a highway for our God." The "doors and gates" of the world's heart were shut against Him. "He came to His own, and they received Him not." The voice of justice to the Jewish Sanhedrim and the whole nation was, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors." Make way for Him—make way for His teaching, for His conquests, for His dominion! It may be applied—

Thirdly: *To the ascension of Christ into heaven.* Amidst what loud acclamations of delight did Heaven throw open its gates to receive back into its pavilion the mighty hero who triumphed over principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly. It may be applied—

Fourthly: *To the admission of Christ into the human heart.* The strong gates and massive doors of prejudice and depravity shut out the human soul from the Divine Christ; He approaches that citadel, and demands an opening. "Behold I stand at the door and knock." "In the Gospel history," says an old writer, "Christ had a fourfold entertainment amongst men. Some received Him into their house, but not to their heart as Simon the Pharisee. (Luke vii. 44.) Some into the heart, but not the house, as the faithful centurion. (Matt. viii. 8.) Some not into the house nor the heart as the faithless Gergesenes. (Matt. viii. 34.) Some into the house and the heart as Lazarus, Martha, and Mary." It may be applied—

Fifthly: *To the spiritual mission of Christ now in the world.* Christ is now in the world—as truly here now as He was 1800 years ago. He is here to put down wrong and to establish the empire of right through the world. Worldliness, superstition, idolatry, scepticism, and wickedness in all its forms have closed the world's gates against Him. The divine demand to the

world on His behalf is, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates ; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors." Let the King of Glory enter your homes, your markets, your temples ! It may be applied—

Sixthly : *To the return of Christ to Heaven at last.* When he shall have finished His work on earth, subjugated the world to His moral authority, He will return to His everlasting rest. "After the judgment," says Keble, "he will pass again through the everlasting doors with a greater company than before : for He will lead along with Him into the heavenly habitation all those who shall have been raised from their graves and found worthy. 'The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout : and the dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up, together with them in the clouds,' " &c.

II. THE EARNEST ENQUIRY. "Who is this King of glory ?" The question is twice put, expressive of the importance of the subject and the solicitude of the speaker. Nor is there a greater enquiry for any created mind than this. Who is the glorious king ? Who is He who rules the universe, and demands my subjection, and the subjection of my race ? Christ when here on earth sought to give man the impression of the importance of this question, "Whom do men say that I am ?" Unless we know something of Him, we shall never open the doors of our hearts, and admit Him to the throne of our natures. This question is here fully answered. The answer says—

First : *That He is One who is strong in Himself.* "The Lord is strong." Who is strong as the Lord ? He is Almighty. The Force of all forces. The answer says—

Secondly : *That He is mighty in battle.*" By the presence of His ark what victories He won with the armies of Israel. Christ, is mighty in battle. His conquests are moral, and how numerous—constant, universal, and ever multiplying they are ! The answer says—

Thirdly : *That He is vast in command.* "The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory !" Who are His hosts ? All *material* existences are His hosts ; the heavenly orbs are His hosts. He marshals them as a commander his battalions. All *spiritual* existences are His Hosts. Men, angels, and devils, are his hosts.

## A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19—21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Fadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

### *Subject:* CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—Ephes. vi. 1—4.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 1.*—"Children obey your parents." Though the word *τέκνα*, translated "children," generally signifies young, it is here used to denote those young especially who are at home dependent upon their parents. A time comes when children become independent of the support of their parents, leave their home, and are no longer amenable to the laws of the parental empire. "*In the Lord.*" Though this expression is omitted by some of the oldest MSS. it is accepted by our best authorities. *κύριος* undoubtedly refers to Christ, as is shown by the context. The idea is that filial obedience should be rendered religiously or out of regard to Jesus Christ. "*For this is right.*" The duty rests not on the ground of expediency, but on the ground of justice. It is an obligation rising out of the relationship existing, and frequently urged with great explicitness and force in the Word of God.



*Ver. 2.*—"Honour thy father and mother: which is the first commandment with promise." To "honour" is to reverence, and this shows that the obedience enjoined is not merely external, it springs from the heart. This precept is said to be *πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ*. This may mean it is the first commandment in the Decalogue, which has a specific promise attached; for the promise connected with the second commandment does not relate to the observance of that particular precept, but to keeping God's covenant. Or it may mean that it is the first commandment of the second table of the law, and has a promise annexed; or, *πρώτη* may be taken here as in Mark xii. 28—30, in the sense of chief, *i.e.*, the first in importance. The sense would then be, "Honour thy father and mother: this is the prime commandment, the first in importance among those relating to our social duties, and it has the specific promise annexed."—(*Hodge*.)

*Ver. 3.*—"That it may be well with thee." This is found in the fifth commandment (Deut. v. 16). True filial obedience tends to happiness on the earth. "Thou mayest live long on the earth." This commandment, as recorded in Exodus xx. 12, has the promise thus:—"that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." True filial obedience is a virtue, and virtue ever tends to physical health and long life.

*Ver. 4.*—"And ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath." Alford renders this—"And ye fathers fret not your children to anger." The irritation of a child's temper is a great evil. There is often a great tendency in the conduct of parents to do so. In many households children are constantly fretted by petty commands, by needless civilities. "But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "Bring them up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord."—(*Ellicott*.) *Παιδεία* is a comprehensive word; it means "the training" or "education of a child," including the whole process of instruction and discipline. *Νουθεσία*, from *νουθετέω* (*νοῦς, τλήμη*), "to put in mind," is included under the more general term, and is correctly rendered "admonition." It is the act of reminding one of his faults or duties."—(*Hodge*.)

**HOMILETICS:** In the preceding paragraph the apostle had treated of the relative duties of husbands and wives, here he directs attention to the relative duties of parents and children.

**I. The duty of CHILDREN.** The words lead us to consider the nature and reason of the obligation which children owe to their parents.

First: The *nature*. The duty is (1) "obedience." "Children obey your parents." This duty has its limitation. When, for example, the command is impracticable, it is not binding.

When the parent makes demands surpassing the child's capacity, he is a tyrant, and the child is free from the obligation. Or when the command is morally wrong, when it clashes with the rights of conscience and the claims of God, obedience to it is no duty, but would be a sin. The duty is obedience rendered in a Christian spirit. "In the Lord." Any conduct towards parents, mankind in general, or to the great God, that is not inspired with love to Christ, has *no virtue* in it. All acts to be acceptable to God must be done in the name and spirit of His blessed Son. (2.) "Honour." "Honour thy father and mother." That is, reverence them. This implies, of course, that they are honour worthy. It is, alas, often the duty of children to abhor and despise the character of their parents, because of its falsehood, intemperance, profligacy, and crime. Paul supposes parents to be what their relation to their children and God demands—pure, generous, and noble. Such parents are to be honoured. Not to honour them is to dishonour God.

Secondly : The *reason*. What is the reason for this obedience and reverence ? (1.) Because it is right. "For this is right." Nature teaches the rectitude of it. There is implanted in every child's mind the feeling that he is bound to obey and reverence his parents. This feeling of obligation in some form or other is universal. The Bible teaches the rectitude of it. It was engraven by the finger of God on the tables of stone ; it was inculcated in the teaching and exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ. (2.) Because it is expedient. "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." A happy and a long life depends upon it. Children who are regardless of their filial duties will be regardless of all others, and rendered liable to fall into those habits of depravity which will render their life a misery, and cut short their days on the earth.

II. The duty of PARENTS. The duty of parents is here set forth in two forms, negatively and positively.

First : *Negatively*. "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath." The temper of a child is of transcendent moment ; it is that which determines his character and destiny. To act upon that temper in its opening years so as to fret and sour it, is to do an incalculable mischief. Against this it is for parents

strenuously to guard. Petty interferences, trivial prohibitions, incessant chidings, and an irritable spirit, are the things in parental conduct which "provoke children to wrath."

Secondly: *Positively*. "But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Train their faculties, bring out their latent powers, teach them to think with accuracy, to love with purity, to act with adroitness and promptitude. Do this by admonishing them "in the Lord." Let the lessons of instruction and warning be drawn from the existence, the life, the character, and the teachings of the Lord. The child's faculties cannot be developed apart from God. Secular education is a contradiction in terms, it is as great a solecism as a sunless vegetation. Let parents look well to the minds of their children. The farmer who neglects the culture of his fields will soon have his acres overrun with thorns, and briars, and noxious weeds; and the parent who neglects the culture of his child, will soon discover evils far more hideous and disastrous.

The following from the quaint pen of smart old Fuller will be read with interest and profit on the subject:—

"THE GOOD PARENT.—He showeth them, in his own practice, what to follow and imitate; and, in others, what to shun and avoid. For though 'the words of the wise be as nails fastened by the masters of the assemblies' (Eccles. xii. 11), yet, sure their examples are the hammer to drive them in, to take the deeper hold. A father that whipped his son for swearing, and swore himself whilst he whipped him, did more harm by his example than good by his correction. He doth not welcome and embrace the first essays of sin in his children. Weeds are counted herbs in the beginning of spring: nettles are put in pottage, and salads are made of eldern buds. Thus fond fathers like the oaths and wanton talk of their little children, and please themselves to hear them displease God. But our wise parent both instructs his children in piety and with correction blasts the first buds of profaneness in them. He that will not use the rod on his child, his child shall be used as a rod on him. He allows his children maintenance according to their quality. Otherwise it will make them base, acquaint them with bad company and shocking tricks; and it makes them surfeit the sooner when they come to their estates. It is observed of camels, that having travelled

long without water through sandy deserts, *implentur, cum bibendi est occasio, et in præteritum et in futurum* ('when they find an opportunity they fill themselves both for the past and the future'); and so these thirsty heirs soak it when they come to their means, who, whilst their fathers were living might not touch the top of their money, and think they shall never feel the bottom of it when they are dead. In choosing a profession, he is directed by his child's disposition, whose inclination is the strongest indenture to bind him to a trade. But when they set Abel to till the ground, and send Cain to keep sheep; Jacob to hunt, and Esau to live in tents; drive some to school, and others from it; they commit a violence on nature, and it will thrive accordingly. Yet he humours not his child when he makes an unworthy choice beneath himself, or rather for ease than use, pleasure than profit. If his son proves wild, he doth not cast him off so far, but he marks the place where he lights. With the mother of Moses, he doth not suffer his son so to sink or swim, but he leaves one to stand afar off to watch what will become of him (Exod. ii. 4). He is careful, while quenched his luxury, not withal to put out his life; the rather, because their souls who have broken and run out in their youth have proved the more healthful for it afterwards. He moves him to marriage rather by argument drawn from his good than his own authority. It is a style too princely for a parent herein to 'will and command;' but, sure, he may will and desire. Affections, like the conscience, are rather to be led than drawn; and it is to be feared, they that marry where they do not love, will love where they do not marry. He doth not give away his loaf to his children, and then come to them for a piece of bread. He holds the reins (though loosely) in his own hands; and keeps, to reward duty, and punish undutifulness. Yet, on good occasion, for his children's advancement, he will depart from part of his means. Base is their nature who will not have their branches lopped till their body be felled; and will let go none of their goods, as if it presaged their speedy death; whereas it doth not follow that he that puts off his cloak must presently go to bed. On his death-bed he bequeaths his blessing to all his children. Nor rejoiceth he so much to leave them great portions as honestly obtained. Only money well and lawfully gotten is

good and lawful money. And if he leaves his children young, he principally nominates God to be their guardian ; and, next to Him, is careful to appoint provident overseers.

“THE GOOD CHILD.—He reverenceth the person of his parent, the old, poor, and froward. As his parent bore with him when a child, he bears with his parent if twice a child : nor doth his dignity above him cancel his duty unto him, When Sir Thomas More was Lord Chancellor of England, and Sir John his father one of the Judges of the King’s Bench, he would in Westminster Hall beg his blessing of him on his knees. He observes his lawful commands, and practiseth his precepts with all obedience. I cannot, therefore, excuse St. Barbara from undutifulness, and occasioning her own death. The matter this : Her father, being a Pagan, commanded his workmen, building his house, to make two windows in a room. Barbara, knowing her father’s pleasure, in his absence enjoined them to make three, that, seeing them, she might the better contemplate the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Methinks two windows might as well have raised her meditations, and the light arising from both would as properly have minded her of the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son. Her father, enraged, at his return thus came to the knowledge of her religion, and accused her to the magistrate, which cost her her life. Having practised, then, himself, he entails his parents’ precepts on his posterity. Therefore such instructions are by Solomon (Prov. i. 9) compared to frontlets and chains (not to a suit of clothes, which serves but one, and quickly wears out, or out of fashion), which have in them a real lasting worth, and are bequeathed as legacies to another age. The same counsels observed, are chains to grace : which, neglected, prove halters to strangle undutiful children. He is a stork to his parent, and feeds him in his old age. Not only if his father hath been a pelican, but though he hath been an ostrich unto him, and neglected him in his youth. He confines him not a long way off to a short pension, forfeited if he comes in his presence, but shows piety at home, and learns as St. Paul saith (1 Tim. v. 4) to requite his parent. And yet the debt (I mean only the principal, not counting the interest) cannot fully be paid. And therefore he compounds with his father, to accept in good worth his utmost endeavour. Such a



child God commonly rewards with long life in this world. If he chance to die young, yet he lives long that lives well; and time misspent is not lived, but lost. Besides, God is better than his promise, if he takes him a long lease, and gives him a freehold of better value. As for disobedient children: If preserved from the gallows, they are reserved for the rack, to be tortured by their own posterity. One complained that never father had so undutiful a son as he had. 'Yes,' said his son, with less grace than truth, 'my grandfather had.' I conclude this subject with the example of a Pagan's, which will shame most Christians. Pomponious Atticus, making the funeral oration at the death of his mother, did protest that, living with her three-score and seven years, he was never reconciled to her, *se nuncquam matre in gratiam rediisse*, because there never happened betwixt them the least jar which needed reconciliation."

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## Germ of Thought.

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*Subject: GOD'S FEELING IN THE FACE OF MAN'S OBSTINACY.*

"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zebaim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city."—Hosca xi. 8—9.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Ninetieth.

**M**ANY have been the ways adopted by God to communicate His thoughts and reveal His will to the human race. But in all, divine truths were always represented in a manner most adapted to the constitution of the human mind. As a finite being, limited to space and time, man could not attain an adequate conception of divine truths without the aid of those analogical associations, with which such truths, in created and finite things, are usually connected. God's omnipotence and omni-

presence could never be duly conceived by man as abstract ideas. But when they are metaphorically clothed with eyes and arms, they immediately become apprehensible. His thoughts must flow through the common channel of human thought before they come down to a level with man. He is often represented in the Scripture, not only as a sovereign, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, whose counsel shall stand, and who will do all His pleasure, and to whom all His works are perfectly known before the foundation of the world ; but as one deliberating, repenting. Though with strict propriety these last cannot be ascribed to Him, for He is not characterized by passions like those which we are conscious of. The most familiar expressions are designed to teach us not what God is in Himself, but how it becomes us fallen, sinful creatures to be affected towards Him.

Thus, though His purpose concerning Israel was fixed and unalterable, yet to impress us with a sense of His inflexible displeasure against sin, and at the same time to leave open a door of hope and encouragement for penitent sinners, we read of a debate, as it were, between His justice and mercy—justice demanded that Israel should be given up, delivered up to vengeance—to such a destruction as that by which God overthrew the cities in the plain of Jericho—Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Seboim. But mercy interposed, pleaded for a respite, and prevailed : “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ?” &c.

There are three things suggested by the passage.

I. THAT MAN IS ABLE TO RESIST GOD IN THE DISPENSATIONS OF HIS MERCY.

This is implied in the words, “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ?” &c.

The supposition, that man is governed by some *divine fate*, or, in other words, that he is a *passive being*, destitute of a capacity to act in any way besides in accordance with the divine will, has arisen partly from three sources.

1. *Unacquaintance with the nature of the human will.*—While disapproving the doctrine, held by many, viz., that the human will possesses a self-determining power, apart from, and

extraneous to, the influence of motives—an absolute sovereignty over its own movements—we maintain that it is free ; that man is so constituted as to be able to exercise authority not only over his own feelings, actions and character, but also over the heart itself ; that he can regulate his disposition, so as to turn his whole soul to be a sanctuary to particular objects. We have three reasons in favour of this view :—

(a) The fact that mankind in general *believe that they are free*—at liberty to choose any course of action they please ; that every system of law and every constitution of government is based upon this belief, is a presumptive proof in favour of the doctrine of man's free-agency.

(b.) *Our own consciousness.*—Though, strictly speaking, we are not conscious of freedom, yet we are conscious that we are not under restraint, compelled to do what is contrary to our volitions. We are conscious that our actual volitions are such and only such as we please to put forth, which leads to the conviction that it is within our power to put forth any volition that we may please.

(c). *Our moral nature implies the same truth.*

It would be a matter of impossibility to think of punishing, either ourselves, or anyone else, for doing what we could not help doing, or blaming for accomplishing what was utterly out of our power to avoid. But our conscience, with its calm majesty, deliberately approves the right, and disapproves the wrong, wherever the rightness or wrongness of any action is presented to our sensation. Hence these arguments, together with the natural result of the opposite view, viz., denial of all human responsibility, amount almost to a demonstrative proof that man is a free agent, and as such, is capable of acting, either in accordance with, or contrary to, the all-perfect will of God.

2. Unacquaintance with *God's moral government—confounding the natural with the moral.* There can nothing be more unreasonable than referring to God's natural power, as one who measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, who grasps the thunderbolt, rides upon the wings of the whirlwind, and takes up the isles as a very little thing, in order

to prove a doctrine wholly irrelative thereto. Man is not only a subject of God's natural government, but also of His moral. God does not rule over him with an irresistible force, but with motives of gentleness and love. It is true that His natural government is not only universal, but also irresistible in its nature. The animal cannot act, in any way, contrary to the strong law of instinct. The roaring sea cannot overstep its boundaries—roll up the mountains however furious its rage may become, it must lie in its own bed. Neither suns, stars, nor comets have power in themselves to move from their appointed orbits. God's government over all these is irresistible in its nature ; but His moral government over man, as an intelligent, thinking being, is such, that man is placed in a position and endowed with a capacity by which he can overstep its boundaries, fly from his appointed orbit by deviating from truth, justice, benevolence, and love.

And though we are taught in the word of God, that the Holy Spirit strives with men, by convincing them of sin, righteousness, and judgment—opening to them the black secrets of their depravity—showing them their wants and misery, and the ample provision that is treasured up in Christ for all their necessities, yet, we are to bear in mind that all these strivings are *persuasive* in their nature—that they are the influences of motives—operating in perfect conformity with our intelligent constitution, otherwise, right and wrong, virtue and vice, would be annihilated from the moral world, and man deprived of the hope of the recompence of the reward, which he has, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

3. *Misinterpretation of some particular portions of the Word of God.* Without accumulating passages, to elucidate this truth, we shall refer only to one or two as specimens of the manner in which even the Word of God itself is wrongly represented. The words are found in Isaiah vii. 9. 10. Where the Lord commands the prophet, saying, "Go, and tell this people ; Hear ye indeed, but understand not ; see ye indeed, but perceive not ; make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert and be healed." This forcible passage is ever and anon brought forth by

some with a view of substantiating the doctrine which we oppose, viz., that man is a passive being, destitute of power either to obey or withstand God in the dispensation of His mercy. But to have a clear, definite idea of the truth conveyed by the prophet in these words, we must consider two things.

(a) *That the prophet uttered them as a prophet, in the language of prophecy, according to which it was customary to represent God, as doing what was actually to be done by men.*

(b). *That the prophecies and every other obscure passage of the Word of God, ought to be interpreted in the light thrown upon them by the teachings of Christ and His apostles.\**

According to these rules, we need but only read these words, as quoted by our Saviour, Matt. xiii. 14, 15, and Paul, Acts xxviii. 27, till we find that it was not God that made the ears of these people heavy, and "shut their eyes," but that "their eyes *have they closed* lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them." The whole passage undoubtedly refers to a wilful, and therefore a criminal inattention on the part of the Jews.

The second passage we shall briefly notice is in John vi. 44, where Christ says, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." These words have been conceived to prove beyond the possibility of doubt the doctrine of man's inability. But though the primary meaning of the term *cannot* have reference to the want of power, yet it is by no means invariably used in that respect; but also, even in ordinary conversation, it expresses determination, and according to the best rule of interpretation, "It always denotes *determination* and not *power*, wherever it is applied in the word of God to acts, whether internal or external, the performance of which depends upon the state of the mind." Upon this principle we cannot paraphrase the words, "No man can come unto me," unto "No man *has power to* come unto me," for the word, *cannot*, has not always this meaning. Therefore these words fall short of substantiating the doctrine of man's inability.

Again, we shall adduce a few plain Scriptural statements to

\* See Hinton's "Theological Works," vol. ii., p. 93, where the whole passage is thoroughly discussed.



illustrate the truthfulness of our proposition—that God himself regards man as having power to resist Him in the dispensation of His mercy. “And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.” (John v. 40.) “How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing, and ye would not.” (Matt. xxiii. 37; Acts xiii. 46; Prov. i. 24-25.) As a conclusion from the remarks that have been made, together with the clear and indubitable import of the words quoted, which might be greatly multiplied, we perceive that man is able to resist God in his mercy—grieve His Holy Spirit. So, if heaven would be arrayed before Him in all its splendour and felicity—hell in its everlasting terror and misery—sin, in all its viciousness, and grace, in all its grandeur and glory, all would prove insufficient to bring him from darkness into light, from the bondage of sin and corruption to enjoy the full fruition of Christian liberty, without the consent of his own will. Therefore, “Refuse not Him that speaketh,” but “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto him.” (Rev. ii. 29.)

II. THAT MAN’S RESISTANCE RENDERS IT NECESSARY ON GOD’S PART TO GIVE HIM UP. “How shall I give thee up Ephraim?” &c. First: *The most applicable means is insufficient for recovering him.* It is God’s general rule to bring about his purposes by means, and these means generally correspond with the nature and the importance of the work intended to be accomplished by them. This is evident in creation. The different elements that form the great structure of the material world. The luminous bodies of the heavens, and the invisible power of gravitation are the means by which He regulates the great machinery of the universe. In the same manner, the gospel is provided, as the most applicable means to meet the exigences of the soul, to bring it into a state of salvation—at peace with God—to love Him and be loved of Him. It is perfectly adapted to our nature and conditions, as fallen, thinking, moral agents, so that it cannot with any consistency be compared to the Ram’s Horns and the Brazen Serpent, the efficacy of which was derived from their divine appointment.

As God’s dispensation toward’s Israel of old was the most

applicable to influence the Jewish mind, to restore them back to God—exterminate every impure propensity in which they indulged, and lead them in the path of moral rectitude and goodness, so the gospel, with all its doctrines, promises, and threatenings—in all its discoveries of truth and sublime revelations of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in their glorious attributes, is fitted to enlighten the understanding, awaken and direct our consciences, annihilate our prejudice, change our hatred to affection, bend our will, turn us away alike from the practice and love of sin, destroy its power over us, redeem us from the hands of the devil and from being under the everlasting scourge of evil, and send the full tide of divine love through the very channel of our being, till our whole souls will be filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

It meets us in every period of life—in every clime and country. It cheers us alike in the childhood of our being, in the maturity of our riper years, and in the second childhood of advancing age. There is no permanent good which it cannot promise, no evil for which it cannot provide a remedy, and a way of escape, no sorrow which it cannot assuage. It is mercy to the miserable, righteousness to the guilty, strength to the weary, courage to the desponding, life to the dying, and joy to the desolate, so that there is nothing wanted in order to restore the soul from the bondage of sin and misery, to enjoy God's favour, and be for ever an object of His endearment, and, as such, able to look with calmness and joy on the trial of the last conflict, and the judgment day, but its own consent, its own volition. But when a man withholds this, God's justice and truth require that he should be delivered up, and made "as Admah and Seboim."

Secondly: *The only means is insufficient to recover him.* There are many wonderful actions performed by men. Philosophy and science have made such progress as to enable men to read the history of the earth in its strata—summon the secret atoms to give up their laws—search out the mysteries of the stars, which fill the fathomless abysses of space with their glory, and call them by names—join islands together by throwing bridges over the mighty deep—change the natural course of instinct by taming the lion of the desert, and the pelican of the

wilderness—compel the forces of the waters and the fires to be their servants—analyse the elements of nature from the flowers of the fields to the flaming fragments of the raging volcano—send their messages with the swiftness of the lightning to the uttermost parts of the earth, even through the pathless sea—take hold of the candle of the Lord, by analysing man's intellectual powers of perception, abstraction, reason, and judgment, together with our moral faculties, of which the conscience is supreme.

But when we reflect upon any human actions, our reason and experience teach us to abstain from concluding that there was no other way than that adopted by its author to accomplish it. The fact that the tubular bridge was raised over the Menai Strait, with hydraulic force, does not prove that there was no other means whereby the same act could be done. But there is only one means in God's universe to bring a clean thing out of what is unclean—raise the soul from the depths of misery and woe to the height of felicity and glory, viz. the atoning love of Christ. True, that different means, such as natural religion, conscience, and circumstances of life, may lead the soul to the Saviour as those sick persons were brought by their relatives to the Pool of Siloam, but the virtue must issue from Christ, and from Him alone. For every plan of salvation, though supported by the wise, the great, and the good, without Christ, is nothing better than a body without a soul, locomotive without steam, watch without a main-spring, and nature without the life-giving influence of the sun. He is the Alpha and the Omega of the whole, the channel through which the healing stream of infinite love and mercy flows to guilty, perishing souls. "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

But as for those who stay away from Christ by resisting His appeals, and refusing to listen to His messengers, as Israel of old, who with their hearts paralyzed and crumbled by self-indulgence, love their sins, and determine to cleave to them, in spite of all the influence of the Gospel; having received the knowledge of the truth, wilfully err in their hearts by crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh, and putting Him to an open shame, there-

is no sacrifice left for their sins (Heb. v. 6). What can the almighty God do better, according to the eternal principles of His divine government, than to deliver them up to the destruction of their sins, to reap the fruit of their own labour, in that place where His wrath, proceeding from His infinite justice and executed by His omnipotent power, will be exercised in the fiery floods of fierceness and inconceivable fury throughout the age of ages?

III. THAT THERE IS AN INFINITE, COMPASSIONATE RELUCTANCE ON GOD'S PART TO GIVE UP MAN.—“Mine heart is turned within me,” literally *upon me or against me*, “my repentings are kindled together,” my mercies (or bowels of mercies) were rolled together.”—(Targum.) “My strong compassions are kindled with the heat and glow of love.” “I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim,” &c.

First: *The relation that exists between God and man renders Him reluctant to give him up.* One is a father the other is a child. “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt.” (Chap. xi. 1.) There is a strong, compassionate feeling in the heart of a father towards his child, so that it would be almost impossible to alienate his fatherly affections from him and make him deliver him up. How reluctant was David to give up Absalom? His last charge to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai was “deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom.” (2 Samuel, xviii., 5.) But this relationship is much closer, and this feeling is much stronger in the bosom of our Heavenly Father. Man is His little Benjamin. Conscious of some traces of His divine image, though grievously defaced and distorted by sin, impressed upon his soul, he could not be satisfied with His elder sons, who sang their anthem on the eve of the world's creation; but would call after man, saying, “unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men.” (Prov. xiii. 4.)

Notwithstanding all Ephraim's desertions from God, His fatherly love silenced the thunders of His wrath continually in his case, so that the life of the disobedient son was spared, “Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child, for since I spake against him I do remember him still.” (Jer. xxxi., 20.) When

a man is gone astray from God, the fountain of living water, to lead the most lawless and sinful life, His fatherly love, like a deep current, runs through His heart, and bears on its resistless wave, not merely a solitary faculty of his being, but his whole soul, so that He is reluctant to deliver him up.

Secondly: *God's knowledge of man renders Him reluctant to give him up.* Man cannot pity any object always and under every circumstance, because his knowledge is not co-equal with his power of feeling, and as his knowledge is finite so is his pity also. But God's knowledge is infinite, and He knows exactly the value of the soul, the perils to which he is exposed, the result of delivering him up as Admah and Seboim, scathed with crushing thunders in that place where hopeless misery will surround him for eternity. And as His mercy is proportioned to His knowledge there must be an infinite reluctance in His mind to deliver him up. "How shall I give thee up," &c.

Thirdly: *God's dealings towards man prove that He is infinite in mercy, reluctant to give him up.* Who can read the history of His dealings towards our first parents, Pharoah, the Israelites in the wilderness, Manassah, yea, humanity at large, in every age and under every dispensation, without being convinced that He is compassionate and merciful—that He is "God and not man" who is swayed by passions and revenge.

But the most illustrious display of divine mercy was (a) the sending of God's only begotten Son into the world, not to destroy it as a desolating angel, "but that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life;" that this son left the habitation of holiness and glory, assumed our nature, was found in fashion as a man, subjected to the yoke of the law, bore our infirmities, and suffered the infamous and torturous cross on our behalf, whereby He finished transgression and made an end of sin, destroyed him, that had the power of death, that is the devil, turn his artillery back upon himself, sapping the very foundations of his kingdom, and establishing those principles that would revolutionize the world and bring all nations under the sway of truth and righteousness.

(b.) And his mercy was displayed also in sending the Holy Spirit, who was the holy one in the midst of Israel, to prick the hearts of three thousands on the day of Pentecost, and to strive



with men ever since, convincing them of sin, righteousness and judgment. He, through His spirit, warns, threatens, and reasons with sinners, in order to bring them to repentance and voluntary obedience, which clearly shows that He is God, and not man; slow to anger, plenteous in mercy and truth. Though many sin against Him—turn the deaf ear to His callings—He hath no pleasure in their destruction, and therefore smites them not indiscriminately as men, who, when wroth, burst into an offending city and utterly destroy all. But He tempers His wrath, as in the midst of it, to remember mercy; He thunders long before He crushes the wicked with his thunderbolt—takes time to whet His sword that men may turn from its edge—roars like a lion that, by hearing His voice, men may shelter from being torn by His wrath. He executes not the fierceness of His anger as He once did upon Admah and Seboim; but stands at the door, with His head filled with dew, and His locks with the drops of the night, and knocks; and if any one hear His voice, and open the door of his heart to Him, He will enter in and sup with him.

From what has been said, we observe (1.) That if God feels so intensely for those who are strangers and aliens from Him, ought not the same compassionate feeling characterise His church universally? Let every Christian church meditate upon the deplorable condition of the world, as filled with all unrighteousness and plunged in idolatry and superstition, and break forth in lamentable strains with the prophet, "Oh, that my head were waters," &c. (Jer. iv. 1.)

(2.) If we are free agents, having control over our dispositions and actions, or endowed with capacity to choose the right and reject the wrong; and if we are objects of divine pity, is it not our most incumbent duty to pity ourselves by receiving God's mercy and obeying His commandments? Let us give ourselves to Him before He will deliver us up to our sins, and then He will not execute the fierceness of His anger upon us; but we shall have an intimate fellowship with Him—filial spirit of confidence towards Him—fitness for death, preparation for judgment, and a well-grounded hope of entering His heavenly kingdom, where sin can never enter—pain and sorrow never pass.

*Subject:* PHARAOH'S BUTLER; OR, THE POWER OF MEMORY, ASSOCIATION, AND CONSCIENCE.

"Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day."—Gen. xli. 9.

Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Ninety-first.

THE story of Joseph is familiar to all. Never loses its interest. Touched our youthful feelings, and retains its hold on the heart to our latest years. Who has not wept with Jacob over the blood-stained coat of his beloved son? Who has not been stirred to indignation by the falsehood and cruelty of Joseph's brethren? Who has not followed, with deepest sympathy, the various fortunes of the young Hebrew, from the time he was carried away captive, till he was raised, in the providence of God, to be ruler, next to Pharaoh, over all the land of Egypt. The text refers to one of the incidents in this wondrous story. Here mark—

I. THE POWER OF MEMORY. "I remember." Memory, a faculty of mind, wonderful, varies in its strength and exercise, accompanied by pains as well as pleasures. All that we have said, or felt, or done, all that we have seen or experienced; all the varied events of our earthly life, have been recorded by memory, so that nothing is lost; and what has been thus recorded, may at any moment be recalled, to be a source of pleasure or of pain. Hence Young only expresses the sober truth when he says

"What wealth in memory's firm record,  
Which, should it perish, could this world recall  
In colours fresh, originally bright  
From the dark shadows of overwhelming years."

And on the same principle Wordsworth speaks of *solitude* as in a sense impossible, "You dwell alone, you walk, you live, you speculate alone, yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign prince, for you a stately gallery maintain of *gay or tragic pictures*."

"I remember." The effect depends on the state of the soul, and on the character of the things remembered, whether good or evil, painful or pleasant. (Cf. Job xxi. 6; Ps. lxiii. 6; lxxvii. 3; cxxxvii. 1; Ez. xvi. 61; xx. 43; Eph. ii. 11; Luke xvi. 25;

Rev. xiv. 13.) Beware. Do some evil deed, commit some wrong against your neighbour or your God ; and try as you will, you cannot *quite forget*. Memory may slumber for a while, but some day it will awake, and then the austere remembrance of that deed will hang upon thy spirit like a cloud, and tinge its world of happy images with hues of horror."

II. THE POWER OF ASSOCIATION. "This day." Why then? For two years all had seemingly been forgotten. Now chord of association touched. *Pharaoh's dreams*. "My own case. I too had a strange dream once," and then in a moment, all the past rose up vividly before him like a yesterday event. We all possess this wondrous sensibility. A book brings to mind the giver; a letter will call up various trains of thought suggested by its contents, and the circumstances in which it was received. A portrait will recall the memory of the distant or the dead, and may lead us to say like Cowper, as to the picture of his mother,

"Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,  
O welcome guest."

Associations are different with different persons. "*This day*" had no special meaning for Pharaoh, but for the butler, it was charged with deep significance. Two persons visit the same place. To one all is new, and there is nothing to link the present with the past; but to the other, every object is full of interest, and as he looks and ponders, he feels "the spiritual presences of absent things;" pictures of the past, of friends and kindred comrades dear, of incidents and scenes in which he played a part, rise up before him, and thrill his soul with various emotions—

"With easy force are open'd all the cells  
Where memory slept,  
Such comprehensive view the spirit takes,  
That in a few short moments we retracc,  
As in a map the voyager his course,  
The windings of our way for many years."

(Cf. Naomi and Ruth.) The elder Jews and the younger on the return from captivity. This power is often appealed to in the Scriptures. Type, symbol, parable, sacrificial rites, memorial stones and festivals, all recognise, and receive much of their

value from, association (Cf. Heb. x. 3; 2 Sam. xii. 1-7; Gen. xxxi. 48; Ex. xxviii. 12; Josh. iv. 7; xxiv. 26-27; Ex. xii. 14; 1 Cor. xi. 24-26.)

In the special case before us behold *the hand of God*. God might have moved the butler to remember his fellow-prisoner earlier, but this would not have consisted with his plan of procedure. Now, however, the set time to favour Israel is come. All things are ready. The great designs of Providence are ripe for execution. Hence the butler is roused to action. It needs but a touch on the chords of association, and the long-forgotten promise is recalled. "I do remember my faults this day." Joseph's release immediately follows. This is but a sample of the sovereign and awful power which God wields over human hearts. (Cf. Ps. cxi., cxii., cxiii.)

III. THE POWER OF CONSCIENCE. "*My faults.*" *Conscience*. Young calls it "a master self"—Pope, "The God within the mind"—Wordsworth, "God's most intimate presence in the soul, and his most perfect image in the world." Byron speaks of conscience thus,

"Yet still there whispers *the small voice within*,  
Heard through years' silence and o'er glory's din,  
Whatever creed be taught, or land be trod,  
*Man's conscience is the oracle of God.*"

So this poor idolator felt. His conscience is roused, and forces him to speak, "I do remember my faults this day." Mark the power of conscience,

First: *In exciting a sense of personal blameworthiness*. "My faults." (1.) *Iniquity*. He had promised to remember Joseph and he had not kept his promise. (Ch. xl. 23; Prov. iii. 27), "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. (2.) *Ingratitude*. Joseph had acted kindly towards him, and had contributed as far as he could to his comfort and advancement. But he made no return. For two years the sun of prosperity had been shining upon him, but all this time he had basely neglected his friend, and left him to pine in prison, forsaken and forgotten. Doubtless at first he had meant to act otherwise. Hence he was ready with his promises, but like many other false friends, he remembered not

in prosperity the pledges which he had given in adversity. (Cf. Psa. xxxi. 12 ; Job xix. 14 ; Psa. lxxviii. 36, cvi. 7, 13.)

Secondly : In exciting *a feeling of painful remorse*. Two ways of looking at this man. May judge him severely or leniently. May see in his conduct no grace of true pity, no fervour of true repentance, but simply *selfishness*, or many regard him as seriously sorry for his faults, and ready to make such atonement as he could. In any case, we must remember how shallow and defective his repentance is, as compared with the repentance of believers in the living true God. (Cf. Psa. xxxii. 3—5 ; xl. 12, 13 ; li. 1—19 ; Luke xxii. 60—62 ; Acts ii. 37 ; 2 Cor. vii. 9—11.) (1.) *Shame*. How differently might he have acted. His remembrance of his friend, tardy, wanting in spontaneity, springing from accidental causes, as much for *his own* advantage *now* as for that of Joseph. Wretch that I am. (2.) *Regret*. Joseph two years in prison. “Hope deferred.” The iron entering deeper and deeper into his soul. And all because of his shameful forgetfulness. Conjured up the image of his friend, and was troubled. Conscience of guilt is prophecy of pain. (Cf. 1 Kings xvii. 18.) (3.) *Atonement*. Frankly confesses his fault. Does the best he can, now, in the case. Reparation is an accompaniment of all true penitence. (Cf. Luke xix. 8.)

Let us make some application of the whole matter. Consider, O man, whosoever thou art, that thou art standing, not before an earthly monarch, but before the King of kings and the Lord of lords. The chief butler confessed his faults to Pharaoh, but confess thou to Jehovah. Say with humble, penitent heart, “I do remember my faults this day.” “God be merciful to me the sinner.”

“*My faults*” against my neighbour and my God, how great ! “Who can understand his errors !” “*My faults*”—they are *mine*, and not another’s. Never in this world, or in that which is to come, can I shake myself free from the responsibility. “*My faults*.” Sooner or later they will be all brought to remembrance. Memory, association, conscience, will secure this, apart from any special interposition of God. Either in the *compunctions of conscience*, or the *sorrowings of true penitence*, or the *tortures of eternal retribution*—they must come up for



review and judgment. "Be sure your sins will find you out."  
 "My sin is ever before me." (Psalm li. 3.) "*My faults.*" "O  
 let me remember and confess them to God *this day*. This is  
 right; this is wise. Delay is criminal and dangerous. God  
 beseeches me now to repent, to be reconciled to Him through the  
 cross of his Son; to come boldly to the throne of grace, just as  
 I am with all my sins and follies, and that forgiveness shall be  
 mine. "Happy is the man whose transgression is forgiven,  
 whose sin is covered." Hear what quaint old Quarles says,

"The swelling of an outward fortune can  
 Create a prosperous, not a happy man;  
 A *peaceful conscience* is the true content,  
 And wealth is but the golden ornament."

WILLIAM FORSYTH, M.A.

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## The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

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The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbiages; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

No. VIII.—PRESIDENT DAVIES.

*Subject:* COMPASSION OF CHRIST TO WEAK BELIEVERS.

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench."—Matt. xii. 20.

**T**HE general meaning of my text seems to be contained in this observation, "That the Lord Jesus has the tenderest and most compassionate regard for the feeblest penitent, however oppressed and desponding; and that He will approve and cherish the least spark of true love toward Himself."

A bruised reed seems naturally to represent a soul at once feeble in itself, and crushed with a burden; a soul both weak and oppressed. Perhaps the imagery, when drawn at length, may be this: "The Lord Jesus as an Almighty Conqueror, marches

in state through our world ; and here and there a bruised reed lies in His way. But instead of disregarding it, or trampling it under foot, He takes care not to break it ; He raises up the drooping straw, trifling as it is, and supports it with His gentle hand." Or perhaps the imagery may be derived from the practice of the ancient shepherds, who were wont to amuse themselves with the music of a pipe of reed or straw ; and when it was bruised they broke it, or threw it away as useless. But the bruised reed shall not be broken by the Divine Shepherd of souls. The music of broken sighs and groans is indeed all that the broken reed can afford Him ; the notes are but low, melancholy, and jarring ; and yet He will not break the instrument, but He will repair and tune it, till it is fit to join in the concert of angels on high ; and even now its humble strains are pleasing to His ears.

The other emblem, "the smoking flax shall He not quench," seems to be an allusion to the wick of a candle or lamp, the flame of which is put out, but it still smokes and retains a little fire, which may be again blown into a flame, or rekindled by the application of more fire. Many such dying snuffs or smoking wicks are to be found in the candlesticks of the churches, and in the lamps of the sanctuary. Jesus walks among the golden candlesticks, and where He finds the least spark of true grace or love, He will strengthen the things that are ready to die. So that here we have—

I. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF WEAK BELIEVERS. "A bruised reed and smoking flax."

First : The metaphor of "a bruised reed" conveys the idea of a state of weakness and oppression.

(1.) *A state of weakness.*

He is weak in knowledge, love, faith, hope, joy, zeal, resistance, courage, prayer, work. He feels and laments these weaknesses, and this is the grand distinction, in this case, between him and the rest of the world. They are much weaker than he, but the poor vain creatures boast of their strength.

(2.) *A state of oppression.*

He often feels himself crushed under some heavy burden. The frail reed is often bruised—bruised under a due sense of

guilt; bruised, too, under a burden of spiritual wants. He also feels his share of the calamities of life in common with other men. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan," says Paul, "being burdened."

Secondly: The metaphor, "smoking flax," conveys the idea of grace, true and sincere, but languishing and just expiring. It signifies a susceptibility of a further grace. This, therefore, leads me to describe the reality of religion in a low degree, or to delineate the Christian in his most languishing hours.

(1.) *He generally feels an uneasiness, an emptiness, an anxiety within.* Sometimes his anxiety is indistinct and confused, and he hardly knows what ails him; but at other times he feels it is for God, the living God, that his soul pants. Let him turn which way he will, he can find no solid ease, no rest, till he comes to this centre again.

(2.) *He is very jealous of the sincerity of his religion.* He is afraid that all his past experiences are delusive, and shudders at the thought.

(3.) *He retains direction and tendency toward Christ.* Like the needle, touched by the loadstone, strives towards the pole, his heart trembles and quivers till it gains its favourite point again, and fixes there. Even the smoking flax sends up some exhalations of love towards heaven.

II. THE CARE AND COMPASSION OF JESUS CHRIST FOR WEAK BELIEVERS. To impress this truth, notice—

First: *The declarations and assurances of Jesus.* He has a peculiar tenderness for the poor, the mourners, the broken-hearted. Hence He says, "The Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings to the meek," &c. "To this man will I look that is poor, and of a contrite spirit," &c. It is written, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd," &c. He charges Peter to feed His "lambs" as well as His "sheep." While none of the seven churches of Asia are so highly commended by Christ as Philadelphia, He says of her, "Thou hast a little strength."

Secondly: *His people in every age have found these promises good.* Here David may be consulted *instar omnium*, and he will tell you, pointing to himself, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles." St.

Paul, in the midst of affliction, calls God "The God of all comfort," &c. It was probably experience, as well as inspiration, that dictated to the apostle that amiable character of Christ, that He is a "merciful and faithful High Priest," &c.

Thirdly : *Go to His cross*, and there learn His love and compassion. Would He hang there in such agony for sinners, if He were not willing to save them, and cherish every good principle in them? There you may have much the same evidence of His compassion as Thomas had of His resurrection ; you may look into His hands, and see the print of the nails ; and into His side, and see the scar of the spear, which loudly proclaims His readiness to help and pity you.

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

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## The Preacher's Dissecting Room.

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"I SPEAK AS TO WISE MEN."

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No. VIII.

JOHN KER.

**W**E have very little to say of Mr. Ker as a preacher, except in the way of admiration. In the volume of sermons now before us,\* we have failed to light on any one discourse which is not of a very superior description. The subjects appear to be very well chosen and handled as a rule ; and there is a combination of ease and brilliancy in the style, and of pathos and depth in the manner, which is peculiarly attractive and satisfying. One feels, in fact, after reading one of these sermons, something as after handling and examining a beautiful flower ; a sensation like that of a delicate fragrance is left behind on the mind.

Nothing is worse, however—nothing, we mean by that, is more injurious, than indiscriminate praise. Not even a savage

\* Sermons by the Rev. John Ker, Glasgow. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas.

and indiscriminate cataract of censure, such as that of which the pages of "Blackwood's Magazine" recently furnished a notorious example in regard to the novel of "Lothair," is so damaging in its way, because such a one-sided proceeding summons a man's friends at once to the rescue, and disgusts and revolts all impartial and indifferent readers. They suspect the motives of a writer who can do nothing but abuse; and so they easily pass to suspecting his opinions and veracity, and so, to believing, even if they cannot see it, that there must have been something to admire where there was such extra anxiety to condemn. Whereas, in the case of indiscriminate praise, you do not summon a man's friends to the rescue, but challenge his enemies to the fight, and stir up the jealous and envious, of whom there are such multitudes on every hand, to hunt for blemishes for themselves. "He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him."

Acting on this conviction, and not only so, but anxious to speak of the various authors whom we attempt to "dissect" exactly as we find them and believe them to be, we would first of all draw attention to some of the "spots" on this Sun. We proceed, accordingly, to take up a very striking and suggestive sermon—a sermon in many points most charming and instructive—to which the writer has given the name of "Moses and Stephen; the Old Testament and the New." This double title is followed by the somewhat unusual device of two texts, viz., Exodus xxxiv. 30, and Acts vi. 15, in one of which we read of Moses, that "the skin of his face shone, and Aaron and the children of Israel were afraid to come nigh him"; and, in the other, that "all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on Stephen, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." On these two passages of Scripture, as intimated by the second title, a contrast is drawn with much power between the spirit of the Mosaic and Christian dispensations. The writer says, p. 171:—

"We shall seek to compare these men, not in their own lives, but in the periods to which they belong in God's revelation. It is the tendency of all history to be typical. We read it very inattentively if we do not see that it is constantly throwing itself up into representative men and events. This is the tendency, above all, of Divine history, for God's providence guides it in a special manner outwardly, and God's Spirit breathes through it all, with a grand unity of aspiration, to one central event. That there should be types in such a history is most natural. The more attentively we study these two incidents, the more we shall see that they have much in common, as both men belong to the same divine mould, and yet much in contrast, as they belong to ages and dispensations wide apart. We shall perceive, in this way, the marvellous progress that was made in un-



folding God's truth from the opening of the law under Moses to the commencement of the gospel era in the time of Stephen. How much deeper and wider and nobler the latter view is, will appear if we look intelligently on the light which shines in the faces of these two men of God."

He then proceeds to work out this idea by instituting the following five principal heads of comparison, viz.,

I. We may compare that view of God which is reflected from the face of each of them.

II. We may compare the effect of the view on the immediate witnesses.

III. We may compare the crisis of life in which each of these transfigurations occurred.

IV. We may compare the effects on the surrounding spectators.

V. We may compare the permanence of the transfigurations in the subjects of them.

These various points of comparison, which are better arranged perhaps than expressed, are all worked out with much care. In reading the sermon itself this is still more apparent, the mind being led on from one comparison to another with increasing interest and sense of importance, and the last point of all being not only the highest in itself, and so the fittest for a conclusion, but also being employed in such a manner as to touch with peculiar illumination on the dark hour of our own departure. We give the whole of this final point of comparison as it stands.

"V. We may compare the *permanence of the transfigurations in the subjects of them.*

"There are some who think that the brightness in the face of Moses lasted till he died, but for this supposition there is not the slightest ground. It faded away into the light of ordinary life as he receded from the great vision, and long ere his countenance was darkened in death it had become as the face of other men. It partook in this of the transitory character of the dispensation to which he belonged, and had its brightest light turned to our world.

"In Stephen it was no passing glimmer of a setting sun, but that lustre in the morning clouds which shows him before he is above the horizon, and which is lost only in perfect day. Moses was descending the hill of God with a brightness which was continually dying; Stephen was ascending the higher mount with a glory growing to all eternity. The death of Stephen is the New Testament translation, and he is to be set as the third with Enoch and Elijah, only higher, inasmuch as each manifestation of God rises while time moves on. It is a greater thing to overcome death than to be carried past it, and here it is no fire-chariot which lifts to heaven, but the outstretched hand of Christ, according to His own word, 'I will come and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also.'

"In the death of Stephen it is intended that we should see how thin the veil is between the two worlds—how the Lord stands on the very confine, sending across His look and arm and voice, so that ere His servant left

the earth he saw his heavenly Master, heard His words, and returned His smile.

"Nor, we may well believe, is that vision of the Saviour in the dying hour so unusual. When Christ and heaven are disclosed in the Bible it is only the curtain cast back from what is all around us at this present time, and even yet, when a saint passes through, the folds may be relaxed a little, and some rays permitted to shine forth that we may guess at the brightness beyond. The calmness and tender sweetness of the dying hour, the faith and patience and hope, are most evident tokens of the presence of Christ's spirit; but may not the smile of more than human joy, the glow which sometimes suffuses the countenance till it is seen like the face of an angel, be the reflection of the look of Christ Himself, and the first faint ripple of the waves of unutterable glory that are beginning to touch the feet and sparkle in the eyes of the awakening soul? Most sure, to those who have witnessed it, is the conviction that there must be light beyond, that this gleam is not from death's darkness, but God's own day, and may well be encouragement to us 'to hope in his word, and to wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; yea, more than they that watch for the morning.'"

But now, as we said before, as to the blemishes in this blaze. And, in the first place, we would ask the question whether the whole contrast is not somewhat forced. Moses and Stephen, it is true, are both representative men; it is true, also, that the one represents the Old Testament, and the other the New: but it is not true that they both do so in exactly the same way. Moses was in a very different position on the one ladder to the position of Stephen on the other. The first, under God, was the sole author and mediator of the Old Testament dispensation; the second was one of the earliest, and, in some ways, was the most distinguished of the witnesses under the New Testament dispensation, but he was only a witness (*μάρτυρ*) when all is said, and only one out of many. The difference, therefore, is very wide. Moses *made* the one dispensation "after the pattern showed him in the Mount;" Stephen *was made* by the other. Moses was as the artificer of a mould; Stephen as the first image that came out of one. The proper contrast, therefore, it is evident, should have been of a different kind, viz., either between Stephen on the one hand, and some equally distinguished Old Testament witness on the other; or else between "Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant," and Moses the mediator of the Old. In the one case we should have been comparing together image with image, and result with result; in the other we should have been comparing artificer with artificer, and cause with cause; and either of these comparisons, therefore, would have been natural and unforced; but the comparison of image with artificer, of work with workman, of result with cause, is arbitrary and enforced—a thing possible, as our author shows us, but only possible by constraint.

And it is worthy of observation, as justifying this remark, that our author seems himself to be conscious of this constraint, and directs our thoughts himself, in one passage of his sermon, to this view of the case. In the portion already quoted by us, for example, he makes use of this expression: "The death of Stephen was the New Testament translation; he is the third with Enoch and Elijah." And the close of the sermon, accordingly, is a kind of amplification of this idea, which is very beautiful and very true in its way. We add the qualifying clause "in its way," because we are inclined to believe, for ourselves, that the supreme and true case of "New Testament translation," the real third step to the far-intervalled "raptures" of Enoch and Elijah, was in the Ascension of the Lord Himself, when He was "parted from" His disciples, and "carried up into heaven." These earlier ascensions were by virtue of this third one, and pointed forward to it; as they also did, through it and beyond it, to that time when all believers who shall be "alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." Still, between them and the death of Stephen there is a closer and completer parallelism than between that and the transfiguration of Moses. For all three of these illustrious saints, Enoch, Elijah, and Stephen, were representative men; they were representatives, also, of three different systems—the Patriarchal, the Legal, and the Evangelical; they were representatives of them, further, in very much the same way, viz., as being their most distinguishing consequences and results—men who showed in each instance what each separate system could produce—men who were courageous witnesses in defence of them before a gainsaying world. (As to Enoch, see Jude 14, 15.) In the case, also, of Elijah and Stephen (and probably that of Enoch as well), the manner and method of their departure was the most glorious feature in their lives; and the only differences were such as were due to the differences of the two systems which they were respectively privileged to represent. Mr. Ker seems to have felt something of all this towards the end of his sermon. If he had thought of it and acted on it from the beginning, we believe that he would have done better even than he has.

And better yet again, we submit, if he had adopted the alternative pointed out by us above, and had made the transfigurations of Moses and Christ the subject of his meditations. Supposing him to touch at all on the illumination of the countenance of Moses, this is the proper, natural, and scriptural comparison to be made with it. Such a comparison is not only extremely easy and unforced, but, as is sure to follow in such a case (so prolific are the mines of scriptural truth when once we

strike the right lode), abundant in interest and instruction ready prepared for our use. If the reader will consider what is said in Mark ix. 15, of our Saviour after coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration, that "all the people, when they saw Him, were greatly *amazed*, and, *running to Him*, saluted Him;" if he will ask himself what it was they were amazed at; if he will note how they ran to Him and saluted Him, and how Aaron and the Children of Israel were afraid to draw near to Moses when he came down from Mount Sinai; and if he will trace the comparison thus suggested a little backward and forward in the histories both of Moses and Christ, he will find, we believe, that the passage we have quoted has led him into such a lode or vein of truth as we have just referred to. Point after point of comparison, point after point of instruction, will present themselves, of their own accord, to his mind; and, like a man standing on the culminating point of one range of mountains, and looking on the culminating point of another and parallel range, not only the two chief peaks themselves, but the whole complicated and corresponding system of minor peaks and spurs on each side will exhibit itself to his eye. In other words, not only Moses and Christ themselves, but the Law and the Gospel as represented by them in similar manner, will be seen mapped out beneath him, and almost every separate particular and feature will help to illustrate and enforce the great saying, "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." This is the comparison, therefore, which we should like to have seen in Mr. Ker's hands. We would not imply, for a moment, in saying this, that we should like his present sermon to have been unwritten. On the contrary, we heartily admit that he has done that with his faulty method (for so we judge it to be), which well deserves to survive; but it is not every man who can venture with success on such perilous ground. Most other men, with so fanciful a subject, would have been elaborately wearisome and barren. It is to the credit of Mr. Ker's powers, rather than of his judgment, that he is nothing of the kind.

There is another feature in this sermon against which we think we must put a black mark. The "division" is not neat; and, not being so, has the effect of making the whole discourse like an assortment of valuable goods that have been clumsily packed. We feel an unwelcome difficulty, in consequence, in "carrying away" the various precious thoughts that have been set before us; and we never feel quite sure that some portion—and that very best portion, it may so happen, of the whole—has not somehow been left behind us. It is just here, in fact, that one chief evil of



a faulty division will be found. If a sermon were mere rhetoric or declamation, designed only to be the means of producing a certain impression for the time, it would be just as well, perhaps, if not better, that all its materials of whatever kind should be presented promiscuously to the eye. There is a rich kind of confusion which is very effective for the time. But a sermon is not a mere speech; neither is it, on the other hand, a mere lecture or essay, but a combination of all three. It should gratify at the time, like a speech; it should give instruction, like a lecture; it should stimulate thought, like an essay. The best portion of it, therefore, is in its results—in that which the hearer makes his own, and takes away with him, and stores up in his memory and conscience for future practical use. But this he can never accomplish unless the materials, as we have said, are “well packed;” unless the thoughts are so sorted, and arranged, and bound together, that he can easily lift and remove and retain them, and also refer to them in their several compartments without difficulty or delay. We cannot think that this has been done in the sermon now before us. The five heads of comparison above quoted are not easy of grasp and retention; they are overburdened with words, and cumbrous; and they lack that point and antithetical character which sometimes compensates for multiplicity of words by hooking an expression, as it were, on the recollection. It is open to some question, moreover, whether the number of divisions in this case is not excessive. Although an iron rule on this point is to be avoided, we rather believe in the old maxim that there should be only two divisions, or, at most, three in a sermon; and that all others which may be found necessary, should fall under these as subordinates, like non-commissioned officers (shall we say?) in a regiment on parade, always useful and always discernible if looked for, but only standing, otherwise, in the ranks. And there seems a reason, too, for such a principle from the very nature of our frames. Men have but two hands, after all. If, therefore, they are to “carry away” a sermon, as before described, it almost seems to stand to reason that it should be divided into two easy packages, at the most, one for each hand; with a third, perhaps, in some cases to be balanced carefully on the head. Or if this consideration be condemned as too fanciful, we can judge from the familiar distinction between a division and a catalogue. In a division, where the members are only small, it is the sense of unity which prevails. In a catalogue, where the numbers are large, the sense of unity is overpowered. It seems to follow, therefore, in regard to a sermon, where the feeling of unity of subject is so important, that the catalogue aspect should be avoided as much as may be.



Thus much as to "what to avoid" in the sermon before us. The more pleasing and easy task of showing what we regard as deserving of imitation in Mr. Ker, we reserve for our next.

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## Biblical Criticism.

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*Subject: ST. PAUL'S INFIRMITY IN THE FLESH.*

(Continued from p. 49.)

2. "Nay, not so," argued Chrysostom (2 Cor., Gal.), as others probably had argued before him; "it cannot have been a headache, it cannot have been any physical malady. God would not have delivered over the body of His chosen servant to the power of the devil to be tortured in this way. The apostle is surely speaking of opposition encountered, of suffering endured from his enemies." And so for a time and with a certain class of expositors, the thorn in the flesh assumed the form of persecution whether from the direct opponents of the Gospel or from the Judaizers within the pale of the Church. This interpretation again was perhaps not uninfluenced by the circumstances of the times. At all events it would find a ready welcome, when the memory of the Diocletian persecution was fresh and when the Church was torn asunder by internal feuds. It appears at least as early as the middle of the fourth century in Eusebius of Emesa (Cramer's *Catena Gal. l.c.*) among the Greeks, and the Ambrosian Hilary (2 Cor., Gal.) among the Latin fathers. It is adopted also by Augustine (Gal.) by Theodore of Mopsuestia (Gal.), by Theodoret (2 Cor., Gal.), by Photius (? *ap. Œcum.*, 2 Cor., Gal.), and by Theophylact (2 Cor., Gal.\*). Thus it is especially the interpretation of the Greek commentators, though not confined to them.

But in spite of such strong advocacy, this account of St. Paul's thorn in the flesh at all events cannot be correct. The passages which allude to it, point clearly to something inseparable from

\* It was so taken apparently also by Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xx. (*de laud. Basil.*) ad fin., and by Basil, *Reg. fus. tract.* ad fin. (T. ii. p. 400, Garnier).

the Apostle, to some affliction which he himself looked upon and which was looked upon by others as part of himself. Any calamity overtaking him from without fails to explain the intense personal feeling with which his language is charged.

The state of opinion on this subject at the close of the fourth century may be inferred from the alternative explanations which Jerome offers in his commentary on the Galatians, derived in part from tradition, but partly without doubt conjectural. These are four in number: (1) St. Paul's carnal preaching of the Gospel, as addressed to babes; (2) His mean personal appearance; (3) Some bodily malady, traditionaily reported as headache; (4) Persecutions endured by him.

J. B. LIGHTFOOT D.D.

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## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

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### MODERN JEPHTHAHS; OR, PARENTAL IMMOLATIONS.

"And it came to pass, at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed."—Judges xi. 39.

JEPHTHAH's history is given with great brevity in the context. We are told that he was the "son of an harlot," who probably was not an Israelitish woman, but belonged to some surrounding nation. Like Joseph, he was the subject of the envy of his brethren. To escape their malice, he withdrew into "the good land, the land of Tob." Here he lived as a brave brigand. The interests of Israel being endangered by the Ammonites, he is unanimously sought for as the leader and defender of the chosen people.—"The elders of Gilcad

went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob; and they said unto Jephthah, come and be our captain, that we may fight against the children of Ammon." In reply to this deputation, he says to them at first, "Did not ye hate me and expel me out of my father's house, and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?" Ultimately, however, he consents on the condition that if he crushed their enemies for them, they should make him their head.

In entering on the terrible charge, he, under an overpowering sense of his responsibility, makes a reckless vow unto the Almighty.—"And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, if thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then

it shall be that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering." He wins the victory, returns in triumph to his home, and who was the first to meet him at his house in Mizpeh but his own loved daughter, and only child? "And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and behold his daughter came to meet him with timbrels and with dances; and she was his only child; besides her he had neither son or daughter," &c. Her reply was that of a heroine of the sublimest kind—"My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which proceeded out of thy mouth," &c. In Jephthah's vow we see two things — (1.) A good feeling overcoming the judgment. His feeling of obligation to God was *good*, but the determination to express that feeling by offering to the Almighty of *anything* that may turn up, as it were, by accident, was *bad*. (2.) A sense of right leading to an enormous crime. The most heinous sins on this earth have been perpetrated under a *sense of right*, and in the name of conscience. Whether the vow meant the sacrifice of his child's life, or the sacrifice of her conjugal right, is a question in which there has ever been a diversity of opinion, and on

which it is not our purpose now to enter.

Our subject at present is parental immolations. "Is there not," says Bishop Wordsworth, "an immolation of children worse than the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter?" We think there is. We stand appalled at the crime of Jephthah; we recoil from him as from a fiendish monster; but are we sure that parents are not dealing more impiously with their daughters here in modern England. The following remarks may illustrate our meaning. We shall go on the assumption that Jephthah actually sacrificed the *life* of his daughter, and—

I. Jephthah sacrificed his daughter TO THE TRUE GOD. It was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom this man offered up his daughter. But what are many modern parents doing? Why, offering up their children to *false* gods.

First: There is the god of *idleness*. The idea which many parents give their children is that work is degrading, inconvenient, and an evil to be avoided, and their great aim is to make them independent of industry. Thus they sacrifice them to the god of indolence, and indolence is ruin.

Secondly: There is the god of *worldliness*. In numberless cases the first idea that is worked into the mind of children by their parents is the importance and greatness of

wealth. They are trained for this ; their exertions are stimulated to this. Money is the divinity to which their very being is consecrated.

Thirdly : There is the god of *ambition*. To gain influence in the world, to get applause, to command attention, this is taught to children as an all-important thing. Hence they are trained in meretricious accomplishments, and dressed in tawdry attire. It is truly lamentable to see the daughters of England offered by the Jephthah fathers to such miserable idols.

II. Jephthah sacrificed only THE BODY OF HIS DAUGHTER. He only quenched her animal life — reduced her frame to ashes, nothing more. The soul of his child he left untouched and free, all its imperishable interests unaffected. But parents in these modern times are found immolating the *souls* of their children ; they are made to prostrate their powers, and to yield the divine sentiments of their nature to idleness, to pelf, to vanity, and fashion.

First: Soul immolation is more *gradual*. Souls are not immolated at *once*, as the body of Jephthah's daughter was, but not the less real and complete. Worldly parents, by the ideas they instil, by the spirit they exemplify, by the example they set day after day, and year after year, succeed, ere the child reaches maturity, to put out the true life of the soul, to

warp its higher faculties, and to quench its higher lights. "Sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death." "To be carnally minded is death." Soul murders are the worst of murders, and parents are often the moral murderers of their offspring.

Secondly : Soul immolation is more *mischievous*. What is the body to the soul? The body is but organized dust, the soul is an imperishable emanation from the Eternal. The murder of the body does not involve the destruction of the soul, the soul of many a murdered man towers into the blessed life everlasting ; but when the soul is destroyed, the man himself is ruined.

III. Jephthah sacrificed his daughter FROM A NOBLE IMPULSE. "It was when the Spirit of the Lord" was upon Jephthah. He "vowed a vow unto the Lord," under a profound sense of his dependence upon God. It is true that the verbal *form* of the vow was a great *mistake*, there was no true judgment in the resolution expressed in the words, "Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house," &c. His strong feelings seemed to swamp his intellect. The religious sentiment in him had run into a wild and ungovernable passion. It is also true that the formal execution of his vow was a *crime*. It was bad to make a wrong vow, and it was worse to adhere to it. The

sooner we break a wrong vow the better: it was wicked of him to say, "I cannot go back," he ought to have gone back.

Notwithstanding all this, the spirit underlying the whole, prompting the whole, was sublimely religious; it was religion rising into the romantic. No such high feeling prompts parents in these days to sacrifice the souls of their children even to the false and ignominious divinities. They do it either from the spirit of custom, vanity, greed, or ambition. It is a cold-blooded, soulless immolation. It has no poetry in it, not even the poetry of wickedness. If there is any feeling, it is the mere lust of the eye and pride of life.

IV. Jephthah sacrificed his daughter with a TERRIBLE REGRET. "And it came to pass when he saw her he rent his clothes and said, Alas, my daughter, thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me," &c. Who can describe his feelings when he laid his hands of violence on his daughter, who came out to meet him, "with timbrels and with dances," his loved and only child: his anguish must have been poignant and overwhelming. But modern parents lay the *souls* of their children on the altar of worldliness, vanity, and sin, not only without any compunction, but with an utter indifference. They look on and

see the moral life waning and expiring, without aught of moral distress. They see the souls of their daughters running into grubs, butterflies, swine, and heave no sigh of regret.

V. Jephthah sacrificed his daughter with HER FULL CONCURRENCE. "And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth." She was willing—the father had her full and hearty concurrence. Do worldly parents in these times get the consent of their daughters to be morally immolated? No. Though it may not be *against* their consent, it is not *by* it, for their parents have not been candid, and told them what they intended doing with them. When Jephthah said, "I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back," his daughter knew what it meant, and forthwith consented. Were worldly parents to say to their daughters at the dawn of their intelligent and moral life, we intend to take all the innocency from your young loves—all the sensibility from your young consciences—all the religious poetry from your young natures—and to make you the dolls of fashion, the devotees of a sham life, the victims of a pampered animalism, and thus rifle you of your birthright as immortals—this would be honest; this would bring the question so thoroughly



home to the young heart as would, we think, rouse opposition to the fiendish plan.

CONCLUSION: How many moral Jephthahs are there to be found in the families of this age. Why condemn this free-booting Gileadite for sacrificing the *body* of his daughter, when we regard as respectable fathers who are immolating the *souls* of their daughters.

#### A MESSENGER FROM THE DEAD.

"And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."—Luke xvi. 30, 31.

A SHORT discourse on the whole of this sublimely solemn and terribly suggestive parable will be found in a previous volume of the HOMILIST.

In passing on to our subject, the following things may be noticed, as suggested by the context:—1. Departed men in the other world think of the surviving here. Dives thought of his five brethren who were in the old family home. We are not forgotten by those who are gone. We are thought about and talked about in the great world of spirits: it is natural it should be so. (2.) Departed men in the other world are interested in the surviving here. Both the request of the rich

man in hell and the response of Abraham in heaven express a feeling of concern. Many reasons may be suggested why the rich man did not wish his brethren to follow him into the dark regions. (3.) Departed men in the lost world make great mistakes concerning the surviving here. The rich man thought that if a messenger from the dead were sent to his brethren they would be saved. This was a mistake: Abraham assures him to the contrary. "And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

The text leads us to consider three things.

#### I. A NEED THE MOST URGENT.

What is the urgent need? *Repentance*. "If one went unto them from the dead they will *repent*." In both worlds this is considered the great want. Dives and Abraham felt this. Repentance means not a mere regret, but a radical revolution; not a mere revolution in external conduct or in doctrinal beliefs, but in the controlling disposition of the soul. So radical is the change, that it is figuratively represented as a resurrection, a new birth, a creation. Now, the necessity of this repentance may be argued on two grounds.

First: From the essential condition of human happiness. What is that! What we have written a hundred times—

supreme sympathy with the supremely good. This is essential to quicken, harmoniously develop, and truly beautify all the powers and faculties of human nature. The loss of this was man's fall; the restoration of this is his recovery.

Secondly: From the urgent demands of Christ. It was the burden of our Saviour's ministry, "Except ye repent, ye must all perish." "Marvel not that I say unto you, you must be born again." The rich man in hell felt that this repentance was necessary. This, then, is the cardinal want of humanity the world over—the one great need of all its needs. The text leads us to consider—

II. A PERVERSITY THE MOST LAMENTABLE. What is the perversity implied here? *Such a craving for what we have not that leads to the neglect of what we have.* Though the rich man did not crave a messenger from the dead for his own sake, but for his brethren, yet his demand expresses a sentiment that animates depraved humanity everywhere. Men are neglecting those means of improvement which they possess from a depraved craving for something they have not. The ordinary is undervalued and unemployed, because the extraordinary is desiderated. It was so with the Jews in our Saviour's time. Their constant craving for more signs and wonders led them to neglect the study of the Scriptures and

the incomparable ministry of Jesus Christ. We see this principle operating in many ways.

First: To the neglect of *natural talents*. How often do we hear men say, "We would accomplish so and so, had we natural endowments of a higher order. Had we lofty genius, great force of intellect, mighty power of oratory, we would make an impression on the world for good; but as we have not these, it is no use to try;" and thus the man hides his one talent in a napkin, because he has not five or ten.

Secondly: To the neglect of existing *opportunities*. The *leisure* that is possessed to study and to pray is neglected by a craving for something more. Men say, "Could we be more free from the din and bustle of business, and settle ourselves down in the quiet of nature, we would be religious," &c. The *leisure* they have is neglected because they crave for more. The *ministry* that is possessed is neglected on the same principle: "Had we a more talented, enlightened, and inspiring minister, we would grow better;" and thus they lose the efficacy of the discourses they listen to. The *books* that are possessed are neglected on the same principle: "Had we a larger and a better-selected library, we would improve;" and the books they have lie undusted on shelves. Thus "Moses and the

the prophets" are neglected from the perverse craving for some extraordinary revelation.

The text leads us to consider—

III. A CERTAINTY THE MOST SOLEMN. The certainty is this, —that a man who neglects what he has would not improve by what he craves for if he possessed it. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Observe two things—

First: The *sufficiency* of *Moses and the prophets* to bring men to repentance. In "Moses and the prophets," we have motives the most mighty to "persuade" men to repent of their ways, and to return unto the Lord: motives gathered from the incalculable value of the soul; from the joys of heaven and the miseries of hell; from the beauties of holiness and the hideousness of vice; from the Infinite perfection of God and the depth, tenderness, and boundlessness of His love to man. The writings of Moses and the prophets did as a fact effect the conversion of millions before Christ came into the world.

Secondly: *The inefficiency of other means, where Moses and the Prophets have been neglected.* "If they hear not Moses," &c. We offer here two remarks. (1.) It is highly *improbable* that were Christ to send messengers from the dead to those who had rejected

Moses and the prophets that they would repent. Suppose a messenger from the dead were sent to those possessing Moses and the prophets: we ask two questions. (a.) Could he give stronger credentials as to the divinity of his mission than were furnished by Moses and the prophets? How could he prove that he came from God? Graveyards and cemeteries contain the dust of the bad as well as of the good. Hades is crowded with the souls of those who were deceivers while on earth, and who are still unreformed. By what test then could we determine that the messenger was divine? By his words? Words are deceptive. By his works? If he performed wonders how could you ascertain the extent of power that departed spirits, though wicked, have over the laws of nature? (b.) Could he give more vital truths than those furnished by Moses and the prophets? Supposing you are satisfied that he came from God, he must either say in substance what Moses and the prophets said, or something different. If he only say the same in substance, what gain have you? If he said different, how could you believe him? If he said there was no immortal spirit in man, no heaven, no hell, no future state, could you believe him? If he said these things, Moses and the prophets said the same. What advantage then would his mission be?

(c.) Could he come to you in a more faith-inspiring way? Any form that is supernatural has ever been terrible to man.

Would not the appearance of a dead man strike the inner heart with such panic as would drive the soul into utter confusion rather than draw it into faith? It has ever done so.

(2.) It is *morally* certain that were Christ to send messengers from the dead to those who had rejected Moses and the prophets that they would not repent. (a.) Christendom at one time believed with a strong faith in the visits of spirits from another world. Dead men were believed to haunt not only every village and lane, but almost every house. Did men grow religious under that faith? No, but superstitious and cruel.

(b.) Men have come from their graves and mingled again with the living. The widow's son of Nain and Lazarus no doubt spoke to their contemporaries, but we have no account that their communications led to faith. (c.) The miraculous cannot convert. It has tried.

(c.) The miraculous cannot convert. It has tried.

CONCLUSION. — We have something more than Moses and the prophets—we have Christ and His apostles; and with increased emphasis it may be said to the rejectors of the gospel, “that if they believe not Christ and His apostles, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead.” Far less than we have brought men to repentance in the ages

that are gone.—Moses and the prophets, &c. We have not only all that is necessary, but all we shall ever have. The great God, of course, could send from the dead a host of messengers to this generation, but inasmuch as they would be useless, such messengers will never come.

#### GOD'S VOICE TO SINNERS.

“Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry.” — Isa. xlv. 12, 13.

IN these words we have three things—

#### I. A WRETCHED CONDITION.

What is the condition? First: *Insensibility* to the good.

“Stout hearted.” The word “stout hearted” does not mean courageous, intrepid, morally brave; it means hardness, obduracy, spiritual stubbornness.

It represents a soul dead to all that is spiritually true and good.

Secondly: *Alienation* from the good. “That are far from righteousness.” To be “far from righteousness” is to be far from all that is noble, God-like, and happy; it is to be in the kingdom of darkness, and in regions under the ban of Heaven. We have here—

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The promise is, Divine deliverance to men in this wretched condition. This deliverance God brings "near" to the sinner. "Near"—(1.) In the Gospel of Christ. (2.) In the ministry of the good. (3.) In the suggestions of conscience. (4.) In the spiritual influence of events. Here we have—

III. AN URGENT DUTY. "Hearken unto me." First: "Hearken unto me" *earnestly*. Withdraw thine ear from the din of worldliness, sinful thoughts, and carnal passions, and open it to me when I speak. Adjust yourself in a listening attitude. Secondly: "Hearken unto me" *constantly*. I am constantly speaking in nature, in conscience, in history, as well as in the Gospel. All my voices are one in significance and aim. I am calling you to my "righteousness" and "salvation." Thirdly: "Hearken unto me" *practically*. What I say attend to. Don't let my voice pass away in mere impressions. Act on my counsels, obey my behests.

#### FAITH'S APPROACH TO CHRIST.

"For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole."—Matt. ix. 21.

LET us seek to reach this incident, and consider what it teaches.

I. *Faith comes with a deep despair of all other helps but Christ.* The woman had tried many means for many years.

All that she possessed she had given: all that man will do for health she had done. Hope had departed. Thus God will let the sinner wander on, and try all other ways of cures not to tantalize him with fears, but to lead him through all. Thus he let the prodigal go, &c.

II. *Faith has a Divine power to discover Christ.* We cannot tell what brought the woman to him. There was something in His looks, His words, His whole personality, that drew the woman to Him. She could not tell why. Faith often goes thus to Christ: straight to the mark like a driven arrow, with grounds that it cannot tell to others, or even tell well to itself. There is an intuition that has reasons in its heart, and that will be able to bring them out full and clear one day. Can you tell why the needle trembles to the pole, the birds feel their way to spring, the flowers to see light? They are made for it, and souls are made for Christ.

III. *Faith comes with an implicit trust to Christ.* There were many things wanting and wrong in this woman: but her faith was very full and absolute in a *perfect cure*, not better, but "*whole*," and also in His ability. "If I may but touch his garment." A touch, a word, a thought from Christ can cure all. For cures come from Him as waters from a fountain, light from the Sun, life from the Great God. They



are the natural emanations that come from Him, hindered only by the obstructions which we interpose.

IV. *Faith seeks for its comfort by close contact with Christ.* "If I may touch his garment."

There is a trait of nature in this which gives us a sense of kinship. The heart seeks to press close to the Healer, as a sick child to its mother's breast. It is the instinct of suffering which Christ himself has sanctioned. He took by the hand her who was sick of the fever. He touched the blind man's eyes, and put his fingers in the dead man's ears. The sufferer and the Saviour must be felt to be in contact, as necessary to our power to lay hold, if not to his ability to help. It is in accordance with this that God weaves His attributes, the token of His presence, to all the works of His hands. The incorporation of God in nature is a step to His incarnation in human nature. He put on the garment of humanity, and drew near in person that we might clasp Him in our arms, and feel the Infinite One to be our own.

V. *Faith, with all its imperfections, is accepted by Christ.* How imperfect this woman's faith was you can see. She thought she could be cured, and He not know. She imagined He healed by a sort of nature, not by a conscious

act of will. What an encouragement to come to Christ truly? "He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." This gives us the hope that if a man trust in Christ for one thing, he will be led on for more from body to soul, from time to eternity. "Be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole."

VI. *Faith feels a change from the touch of Christ.* "And she felt in her body she was healed." (Mark v. 29.) There was an inward sense which could not be mistaken, of return to wholeness—the stanching of a wound through which life, for long years, had been slowly ebbing, and the rising of a tide of new existence which made her feel she could yet be, and do something, in God's world. It is almost worth years of weary wasting, to have an hour of the blessed consciousness when faith, under a sense of its need, touches Christ, the virtue that comes from Him gives such a refreshing feeling to the soul. There is a crisis of this kind in every spiritual history: if the new life is to begin, some turning point when it sees in to health and hope. There are men in whose presence you feel strength and comfort, whose looks and words are like a reinforcement to turn the battle from the gate.

JOHN KER, D.D.

# Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCLXX.)

## HUMAN LIFE.

"He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail."—Prov. xxii. 8.

THE words present three subjects:

I. THE INEVITABLE WORK OF HUMAN LIFE. What is the work? It is that of moral agriculture—*sowing and reaping*. Every man in every act of life is doing this. Every volition, whether it takes the form of a thought, a word, or a muscular act, is a *seed*. There is a germ of imperishable life in it. No frost is cold enough, no fire is hot enough, no weight is heavy enough to destroy this germ. It is *essentially incorruptible*. What seeds men sow every day. What bushels they deposit in the moral soil of their being.

But they *reap* as well as sow every day. What was sown yesterday they reap to-day. "Men are living in the fruits of their doings." The law of causation is inviolate and ever operative within them. Out of our moral yesterday has grown our moral to-day, and thus on for ever. We are *sowers* and *reapers* all of us.

The words present—

II. THE RETRIBUTIVE LAW OF HUMAN LIFE. *What you sow you'll reap.*

First: What you sow in *kind* you reap. "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity." Job says, "They that plough in-

equity and sow wickedness reap the *same*," (Job iv. 8.) Paul says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. vi. 7, 8.) The man whose actions are carnal, selfish, profane, ungodly, will reap a terrible harvest of misery. It cannot be helped. God will not reverse the law. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap."

Secondly: What you sow in *measure* you shall reap. Not a grain will be lost. Sometimes the seed which the husbandman commits to the soil rots. The spring comes round and it appears not above the ground—it is dead. But not a grain in the harvest of life is lost. The more blessed deeds sown the more blessed life enjoyed, and the converse. He will reap the richest harvest of blessedness who is most active in deeds of love and Godliness.

The words present—

III. THE TERRIBLE MISTAKE OF HUMAN LIFE. What the mistake? "Sowing iniquity."

First: *This is a general mistake*. The unregenerate millions in all lands are sowing iniquity.

Secondly: *This is a mistake which men are slow to learn*. Though conscience, the Bible, experience, and the divine spirit

are all co-working to convince men of this mistake, they blunder on.

Thirdly: *This is a mistake whose ultimate consequences will be terrific.* "And the rod of his anger shall fail;" or as in the margin, "With the rod of his anger he shall be consumed."

Perhaps this expression refers to the tyrannic power exercised by wealthy men, as referred to in the preceding verse. "The rod by which he oppressed and smote the poor, for his own selfish ends, that rod 'shall fail.' Death shall wrest it from his hands. God shall break it in pieces; and his tyranny and iniquity shall leave him nothing but shame, remorse, and the fruits of divine vengeance. 'Such,' says Mr. Bridges, 'was Sennacherib in olden time, such was Napoleon in our own day. Never had the world so extensive a sower of iniquity, never one reaped a more abundant harvest of vanity. The rod of anger was he to the nations of the earth. But how utterly was the rod suffered to fail, when the purpose was accomplished! despoiled of empire, shorn of greatness, an exiled captive.'"

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(No. CCLXXI.)

GENUINE PHILANTHROPY.

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor."—Prov. xxii. 9.

SINCE philanthropy in England the last few years has become a *profession*, its name is fast losing its divine significance and its soul-captivating charms. There are hirelings and charletans itinerating the land, and canting in every town of the empire in its sacred name. They wrap

themselves in its robes, and use its sacred language, in order to gratify more effectually their ambition and their greed.

The text leads us to notice three things concerning genuine philanthropy—

I. THE KINDLINESS OF ITS DISPOSITION. "He that hath a bountiful eye," &c. In the Hebrews, says Wardlaw, the expression is—"He that is *good of eye*." The opposite phrase—"an *evil eye*"—is frequent in Scripture, and is used in various senses. It is applied, for example, in a general way, to *duplicité of principle*, in which sense it stands opposed to what our Lord calls "having the eye single," &c. (Luke xi. 34). It is applied also to a *perverted state of the affections* towards any of these objects—supposed, of course, to be indicated by the looks. (Deut. xxviii. 54, 56.) It is further used for envy (Matt. xx. 15; Mark vii. 22); and further still for a principle closely allied to envy—*covetousness*—eagerly looking at the object desired, and grudging at every expenditure of it. (Prov. xxiii. 6; xxviii. 22; Deut. xv. 9.) This meaning is illustrated by the use of the corresponding expression, in the verse before us,—"a *good eye*." It means the eye of compassionate and generous tenderness,—that looks, with a desire to relieve the wants and woes of others; and that, at the same time, does not merely weep—shedding unavailing tears—but, affecting the heart, opens the hand—"for he giveth of his bread to the poor." As the heart looks out through the eye, it appears in the eye. Man's dispositions are reflected in his looks. What a blessed thing to

have a bountiful heart! A thousand times better to have a bountiful heart with scanty provisions, than a niggardly heart with boundless affluence. The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things he shall stand."

The text leads us to notice—

II. THE BENEFICENCE OF ITS ACTIVITY. "He giveth of his bread to the poor." Genuine philanthropy is practical. It does not live on mere sentiment or speech. It goes out in useful deeds. The true philanthropist is ready to distribute and willing to communicate. He gives not as a duty, but as a privilege.

The text leads us to notice—

III. THE REWARD OF ITS SERVICE. "It shall be blessed." "Blessed is he that considereth the poor."

First: *He shall be blessed with the commendation of his own conscience.*

Secondly: *With the grateful affection of the poor.*

Thirdly: *With the approbation of his God.* "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday; and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not." (Is. lviii. 10, 11.) "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxv. 40.)

(No. CCLXXII.)

THE SCORNER.

"Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease."—Prov. xxii. 10.

THE scorner is a character which Solomon has frequently called our attention to in preceding chapters. Few characters in society are more despicable in spirit or pernicious in influence. He is profane, contemptuous, insolent, flippant, and splenetic. He deals in jeers and gibes, in sneers, satire, and lampoon. Himself the most contemptuous to others, the most contemptible in himself. He sneers at the sacred, he mocks at the momentous. The text presents him—

I. AS A SOCIAL DISTURBER.

"Cast out the scorner and contention shall cease." Implying that he is the breaker of harmony, the creator of ill-feeling and confusion. (1.) He is a disturber in the *family*. The domestic circle to which he belongs, or with which he has any connection, he is sure to agitate with heartburnings and jealousies. (2.) He is a disturber in the *church*. If he happens by hypocrisy to have gained admission into any christian community, the community will almost inevitably feel his pernicious influence. His irony will create wounds, his jests shock the serious, his inuendos shake confidence and create suspicions. (3.) He is a disturber in the *nation*. If he takes up with politics, aspires to popularity, and has oratoric power, he is a demagogue, a fire-brand. His object will be to disparage his superiors, to undermine authority, to set class against class. He is, in

fact, a disturber in all his social relations.

The text represents him—

II. AS A SOCIAL OUTCAST. "Cast out the scorner." Excommunication is his righteous doom. If he has gained great influence as a politician, governments sometimes, instead of casting him out, take him into office, and bribe him by voting him a princely income. Thus silences the miserable hireling, and rids the country of his mischievous agitations. The spirit, however, is still there. It is only pampered into plethoric indolence. The duty, however, of society towards the scorner is to expel him. He should be cast out from all places of public trust, from all confidential intercourse. He should be treated as a social pest. Society should throw on him the eye of dignified contempt. If he is the member of a family, cast him out; member of a Church, cast him out; a member of the cabinet, cast him out. Place no confidence in the man of a scoffing spirit. He is a canker worm in the social garden, and he must be crushed. He is a Jonah on the social bark, and the sea will "not cease from its raging" until he is thrown overboard.

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(No. CCLXXIII.)

#### THE GOOD MAN.

"He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend. The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge; and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor."—Prov. xxii. 11, 12.

THIS passage leads us to consider the heart, the speech, the influence, and the blessedness of a good man.

I. THE HEART OF THE GOOD MAN. "He loveth pureness of heart." Not merely does he love the pure in language, in manners and habits, in outward deportment, but the pure in heart. Pureness in the very fountains of moral life and action. Pureness of heart in man's case implies—

First: *A moral renewal.* All men in an unregenerate state are defiled by sin. The very well-springs of their life are polluted. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and dreadfully wicked." It implies—

Secondly: *An urgent necessity.* Without pureness of heart there is no true knowledge of God, or fellowship with him. "Blessed," said Christ—"are they that shall see God." "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." A good man is then a man who loves pureness of heart, who possesses and promotes it. For this heart David prayed, "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

II. THE SPEECH OF THE GOOD MAN. "For the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend." "By the grace of his lips" we are to understand something more than grammatic accuracy, or elegant diction—something more than logical correctness or strict veracity. It means speech that is *morally* pure—pure in sentiment, pure in aim. It is said of Christ that the people wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. The man of a pure heart will have lips of grace. "If the tree is made good, the fruit will be good." "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"—his speech well seasoned with salt, and he will



minister grace unto his hearers. Gracious speech is the antithesis of untruthful, malicious, and unchaste language.

III. THE INFLUENCE OF THE GOOD MAN. "The king shall be his friend." Solomon here speaks probably of his own determination. He meant to say that he would give his friendship to such men. "This," says Mr. Budges, "had been his father's resolution" (Psa. li. 6, cxix. 63). This character smoothed the way to loyal favour for Joseph (Gen. xli. 37—45.) for Ezra (Ez. vii. 21—25), and Daniel (Dan. vi. 1—3, 28.) Nay, we find godly Obadiah in the confidence of wicked Ahab. (1 Kings xviii. 3, 12; 2 Kings xiii. 14). So powerful is the voice of conscience, even when God and holiness are hated! Yet this choice of the gracious lips is too often rather what ought to be, than what is. (Chap. xvi. 12, 13.) Well is it for the kingdom when the sovereign's choice is according to this rule. (Chap. xxviii. 2; xxv. 5.) Such alone the great King marks as *His friends*. Such He embraces with his fatherly love. (Chap. xv. 9.) Such He welcomes into His heavenly kingdom. (Psa. xv. 1, 2; xxiv. 3, 4.) "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. v. 8.)

III. THE BLESSEDNESS OF A GOOD MAN. "The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge." Three different interpretations

have been given to the expression, "the eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge."

First: *That the Lord vigilantly watches over His truth in the world.* This is a truth, although we are not disposed to accept it as an interpretation of the passage. It is a glorious and elevating truth—That the Great God has ever exercised a watchful care over His truth in the world.

Secondly: *That what the eyes of the Lord see He remembers forever.* "The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge." He retains His knowledge. What we see often passes away from our memory. We do not preserve our knowledge. We forget far more than we retain. Not so with the Lord. He observes everything, and everything he observes remains with Him for ever. But we are not disposed to accept this as the idea of the passage.

Thirdly: *That the Lord exercises a protecting superintendence over those who possess His knowledge.* That it means, in fact, the same as the expression elsewhere. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous." This we accept as the true idea. It, therefore, expresses the blessedness of a good man. He has an all-wise, an all-constant, all-mighty keeper. "Whilst the Lord keeps the good man, He overthroweth the words of the transgressor."

## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

### GRASPING THE PITH OF SUBJECTS.

**F**EW positions perhaps would be more readily admitted, though few appear to be less understood or practically regarded, than that of Plato: *Tò ἀληθές ἐν βραχεί κείσθαι*—"Truth lies in a small compass." Philosophers have long alleged that no limits can be assigned to the compressibility of matter; and the theory of Boscovich is now pretty well established, that the constituent portions of the densest objects in reality never touch each other; a circumstance which at first seems more curious than the fact, that neither the waters of the sea, nor those of fresh rivers or lakes, ever come in contact with their living tenants. The reflection, however, is not less true than wonderful, that the particles composing the most solid masses, as the hardest granite or marble, are separated by interstices which nothing but the structure of our organs prevents us from regarding as in a sense equivalent to the space occupied by oceans or continents:—an approximation to which effect, if not mystically presented in certain states of sleep, or in certain abnormal or diseased conditions of the brain, that seem to exclude opaqueness, is perhaps an organic law with myriads of infinitesimally minute orders of being, to which the progress of the shadow on the sundial, or even that of leaves in their growth, would be as perceptible, and appear as rapid, as the motion of ships or carriages does to ourselves. Be this as it may, analogy might lead us to conjecture that the products or thoughts of the mind, though bearing so great a multiplicity of forms, are susceptible of indefinite condensation, or capable of being resolved into a few primary and comprehensive principles. Thus the whole phenomena of the material universe, as well as those presented by the world of intellect, may resemble the infinitely varied appearances exhibited by the kaleidoscope, all of which are dependent on the simplest mechanism and laws.

Perhaps the leading distinction of superior intellect, as a perceptive, not creative or poetic endowment, is a power of compression; a faculty which presupposes that of generalization. A subordinate understanding never perceives more than certain fragments or mutilated portions of a topic—surveying the field of thought as a landscape through a tube; or, bewildered amid the maze of details and appendages, attaching as much import-

ance to these as to the fundamental and most decisive elements. A vigorous genius discriminates the essence of a question, and by its rapid operations reduces the necessary particulars to a very minute compass.

Condensation results from the mastery of a subject. It is but imperfection of view or imbecility that occasions diffuseness; and to such a cause, rather than amplitude of resources or invention, that we owe the generality of bulky tomes; for great books, like large skulls, have often the least brains.

What may appear a paradox to some, is in reality but simple truth, that not only a chief part of learning, but the higher operation of thought, is closely connected with the art of rejection: on which account original fruits of mind seldom show themselves at an early season, or before it acquires sufficient courage and self-dependence to cast off the errors or artificial impressions it has received.

The very appropriation of what is valuable, and the rejection of what is worthless or indifferent, in things relating to mind, argue no slight intellectual superiority. Many persons read books in the way the multitude hear sermons, who, provided the tinkling of the bell continues, are satisfied; or, somewhat as mere scholars study the *Iliad*, which, being alike Greek and the composition of Homer, is all conned with equal fondness or assiduity. Yet few even of the best productions but may be compared to certain antique figures that have come down to us, part of which represents a living if not a beautiful object; the rest a piece of dead mechanical matter.\*

Of ten thousand reflections that arise, and for a while perhaps mingle with imagination in creating a vivid interest, not one may be entitled to the slightest record. Even in a professed treatise or dissertation, it is rare to find more than two or three prominent ideas, which may be considered as the basis of the production, and to which the other parts are only subordinate. In most instances those ideas might be comprised in a remarkably brief space; but to give them a certain form, they are generally mixed up with much connecting or extraneous matter, are elucidated or expanded, supported by arguments, protected against objections, or compared with collateral topics; so that out of few particulars as at first conceived by the fancy, a book is at length elaborated. It has been alleged by an acute philosophical critic, that the whole system of Reid is presented in a page of Pascal, and Beattie's *Essay* in one sentence: "L'unique fort des

\* Several specimens of the kind will be found in the learned Montfaucon, "*L'Antiquité Expliquée*," especially in the delineations of the Lamps, tome v. partie 1.

dogmatistes, c'est qu'en parlant de bonne foi, on ne peut douter des principes naturels."\* Butler's Analogy, which none will accuse of extraordinary diffuseness, appears to have been suggested by a remark of Origen, quoted in the preface, and which certainly contains the germ of the performance. In like manner Brown's views on Causation, to which he has devoted an entire disquisition, and which tincture most of his metaphysical speculations, had been substantially expressed by Edwards in a single sentence.† The latter author's celebrated work on the Will

\* *Memoirs of Sir James Mackintosh*, vol. i. p. 410. The citation, in reference at least to the views of the writer, should be seen in its connexion, as given in the correct and truly critical edition of the "*Pensées*," by M. Havet, article viii.; where the sentiment, so tersely described, is alternately combated and defended; though in no way can assent to it be fairly predicated of Pascal; as whatever the apparent or momentary expressions of approval, his writings again and again pronounce the "natural principles" alluded to utterly untrustworthy. Indeed the great object of the treatise which he meditated in support of Christianity, and of which the fragments compose the work just mentioned, was to induce the persuasion that there is no truth or certainty in the testimony of the senses, in the primary or axiomatic principles of belief, or in the operations of the ratiocinative faculty; in any thing, in short, outside the region of what he calls faith—(*hòrs de la foi*). It is scarcely surprising that the pyrrhonism of Pascal, quite equal, by the way, to that of Montaigne, which he delineates and applauds in a comparison of that writer and Epictetus, should be found in conjunction with adherence to a Church whose dogmas reason is peremptorily forbidden to scan. Perhaps it is unnecessary to say that all the editions of the "*Pensées*" anterior to that of M. Faugère, in 1844, after the original manuscripts, are more or less spurious, being mutilated, interpolated, and not seldom falsified both in sense and phraseology, by the first editors; while the piece on Epictetus and Montaigne is given correctly in no modern edition before that of M. Havet, in 1852.

† "Cause is that, after or upon the existence of which, or the existence of it after such a manner, the existence of another thing follows."—*Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. i. ed. 1834. *Appendix to the Memoirs*, p. clviii. This definition would seem to have been penned by Edwards about the commencement of his college life, or in the former part of the last century. The circumstance, therefore, may be added to the instances enumerated by Dugald Stewart, in which the doctrine commonly ascribed to Hume, respecting necessary connexion, had been anticipated by other writers—(Stewart's Introduction to the Encyclopædia; and Note C in his *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*). Among the examples mentioned, those of Malebranche and Hobbes must have preceded Edwards by a considerable period. The same may be said of Berkeley; for the passages quoted by Stewart are taken from the treatise called *Siris*, published in 1744; whereas similar views on causation occur in a much earlier production, the *Principles of Human Knowledge*, which appeared in 1710, when Edwards was only seven years old—views, indeed, which formed an essential part of the Bishop's theory, according to which all sensations or perceptions are but ideas immediately imprinted on the mind by the Author of our being.

consists chiefly in the development and application of two simple principles ; that in moral inquiries necessity is another word for certainty, and inability for disinclination.

WILLIAM BENTON CLULOW.

(*To be continued.*)

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## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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**FIVE YEARS IN DAMASCUS.** By J. L. PORTER, D.D., LL.D. London : John Murray, Albermarle Street.

THIS is the second edition of a valuable work which we noticed some years ago. The modifications and improvements which the author has made, we cannot vindicate better than in his own language. "In preparing a new edition of this work, I have not thought it necessary to retain minute topographical details. These have already served the purpose for which they were originally written, to rectify the map of that section of Eastern Syria embraced in my travels. I have also omitted the Greek and other inscriptions, as they are of little importance to the general reader, and the scholar may now obtain access to them in the "Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature," where they have been published, with a valuable commentary by John Hogg, Esq., F.R.S. While I have thoroughly revised the whole work, carefully re-examined every point connected with geography and antiquities embraced in it, and considered with respectful attention the critiques with which numerous reviewers and correspondents have favoured me, I have not seen my way to change a single statement, or modify a single opinion. The book remains in substance as it was written fourteen years ago." We recommend our readers to get their information of Eastern lands and peoples, not from the superficial books, pamphlets, articles, and lectures, of those who have made a two or three months galloping tour through the Holy Land, and who write and lecture on their travels in order to raise money to pay the expenses of the excursion ; but from men like Dr. Porter and Dr. Thomson, who have spent years in the countries of which they write. This is a capital book.



THE BLESSED SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, regarded from a Layman's Point of View. By DANIEL BIDDLE. London: Williams and Norgate, 14, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden.

THE Church of England and the Church of Rome both of them declare that there is a real partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Supper. So far, therefore, they are agreed. But it is little more than a verbal agreement; for whereas the Church of Rome receives the truth conveyed in these words in a material sense, and maintains that the bread and wine losing their original character, become transformed into the very substance of Christ's body and blood, by an act of what is called *transubstantiation*: the Church of England regards the real partaking entirely in a spiritual sense; that is, she believes that the bread and wine remains bread and wine still, (though set apart for a high and holy purpose by the prayer of consecration), and that the reception of the priceless gifts, of which the elements of bread and wine are symbols, is an act of faith in the heart of the recipient; so that if faith be wanting in the individual there is no sacramental reception though the bread and wine be taken. The Church of England, in fact, holds a position in regard to the Holy Communion as nearly possible midway between those who advocate the doctrine of substantiation on the one hand, and those who deny the efficacy of the Sacrament altogether as an actual means of grace on the other. This, we consider, is a fair statement of the case. This book is a "word in season." The author has proved himself thoroughly competent for the task he has undertaken.

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PSALMS, HYMNS, AND ANTHEMS. By SAMUEL SMITH. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

It is very sad that those who draw up books of this kind for public devotion, should feel no obligation to eliminate from the Psalms those expressions that are local, temporary, and have no application whatever to the men of this age. How absurd it is, for instance, to expect healthy and well-fed people in modern congregations, to sing words like the following, which are found in the 93rd page of this book. "For my bones are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. My heart is smitten and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread. By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin. I am like a pelican of the wilderness. I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop. Mine enemies reproach me all the day, and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping."

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A RHYMED HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS. By FRANCIS BARHAM and ISAAC PITMAN. London: Fred. Pitman, 20, Paternoster-row.

"A HARMONY of the Gospels is the grandest epic in the world. What epic has ever treated so magnificent a theme as the manifestation of God in the form of man, to redeem mankind? In tracing the history

of the Messiah through its successive stages, the Gospel epic exhibits the noblest unity of design, and the noblest variety of wonderful incidents. It is, indeed, the epic of epics. Its very fragments have given birth to the finest poems which have distinguished the names of Milton, Klopstock, and other religious bards." So say we. This work gives the life of Christ in a poetic paraphrase, faithful to the historic record, and tuneful in verse. Some of the pieces are exceedingly beautiful, and from the book not a few valuable hymns might be selected. A rhymed version like this is likely to convey Evangelical facts more readily to the mind, and make them more impressive to the memory of children than the prosaic narrative. The compositions are given in the old, as well as in the modern orthographic forms.

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**A CRITICAL ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT:** Presenting at one view the authorized version and the results of the criticism of the original text.  
London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 15, Paternoster-row.

"THE design of the publishers in this edition of the English New Testament, is the employment of that version as a groundwork on which to exhibit the results of the criticism of the original text for the use of the general reader. For this purpose they have taken the following critical texts, to furnish the readings which have been thus exhibited: those, namely, of Lachmann; of Tischendorf, in his last completed edition; of the Twofold New Testament, slightly altered in some places on a careful review; of Alford, as finally given in the abridgement of his larger work; and of Tregelles, as far as it has been already published. With each variation from the common reading, those of the above named critical texts are cited in which such variation has been adopted; and, in addition, the principal documents by which it is supported, whenever such citation has been deemed material." It will be seen that this is a most useful edition of the New Testament.

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**FAITH'S JEWELS PRESENTED IN VERSE WITH OTHER DEVOUT VERSES.**  
Edited by LORD KINLOCH. Edinburgh: Edmonster and Douglas.

"THESE," says the noble editor, "are some of the Christian's possessions, to which, not unaptly, may be given the name of Jewels of the Faith. I venture to present some of these as it were in a new setting. I have endeavoured in spirit and tone to match with these the other verses in the volume, of which perhaps, one or the other may, to use words of George Herbert, 'turn the advantage of some poor dejected soul.'" There are many beautiful gems scattered throughout this volume. It is a pity the names of the authors are not attached.

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**THE HISTORY OF METHODISM.** By ABEL STEVENS, LL.D. London: William Tegg.

THIS history extends from the death of Wesley to the Centenary Jubilee of Methodism. Methodism has a history worth the study not only of Christians, but of philosophers and politicians. It has grown not only to

a great power in England, and in America, but a great power in heathen lands. This power is increasing. It is making history rapidly. We rejoice in its growth, and trust that as it advances, it will become more expansive in its doctrinalism, more unsectarian in its spirit, more magnanimous in its discipline, and more Christ-like in all. Not only will Methodists be interested in this history, but it has much to charm and instruct all of every Christian denomination.

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**CHRISTIAN REVELATION VIEWED IN CONNECTION WITH MODERN ASTRONOMY.**

By THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. London: The Religious Tract Society, 56, Paternoster Row.

WE read these discourses in our youthful days, and they were to us soul-stirring and enchanting. We regret to find that their perusal now fails to reproduce the old impressions. The cause of the change, of course, is in us. We have grown familiar with the truths, and we have, rightly or wrongly, gained a distaste for redundant rhetoric. Albeit we rejoice in the republication; they will everywhere have a charm for the young, and a power to do them good. The spirit of such a man as Dr. Chalmers, whatever the character of his thinking, or the style of his expressions, cannot fail to give a quickening and a noble impulse to those who come under his influence.

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**THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY UNDERLYING THE REVELATION OF REDEMPTION.** By REV. GEORGE PATERSON. Edinburgh: W. Oliphant & Co.

THIS book is divided into three parts:—The first treats of the Old Testament, or the manifestation of the Father; the second, of the Gospel, or the manifestation of the Son; the third, of the Apostles, or the manifestation of the Holy Ghost. The book contains a treatment of nearly all the passages of the Bible in which there is a reference to the Eternal in either of these manifestations or relations. It is a thoughtful production, rigorously orthodox, and the production of a man who evidently believes in what he propounds, conscious of a power to make good the grounds of his belief.

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**RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ENGLAND.** From the Reformation to the End of Last Century. A Contribution to the History of Theology. By Rev. John Hunt, M.A. Vol. I. London: Strahan and Co., 56, Ludgate Hill.

THIS is a work of great historic and theological value. It displays great learning and immense research. "It shows," as the author says, "how cautiously, and yet how surely, the naturally Conservative English mind has been working out its own religious position. At the Reformation we awoke to a higher sense of duty. All the problems of religion, indeed, are not yet solved, but our position to-day is sufficient to convince us that truth is to be found in the path we have chosen." This work will, of course, find a place in all theological libraries.



# A HOMILY

ON

## *Methods for Abolishing War.*

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“He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth.”—Psa. xlv. 9.



HE war that now rages on the Continent of Europe so possesses and agitates the soul that one can think of scarcely aught besides. Like a thunder cloud, it hangs over our heavens, throwing its dark shadows over every object in our mental sphere. We shiver under its gloom, we stand aghast at its hideous hues and shapes. Never have we read of anything in history to equal its moral enormities—never have we conceived of anything half so fiendish even in the depravities of our race. It seems as if the gates of hell were thrown open, and the disimprisoned fiends, bounding to earth, hasten to hold their infernal riot in human souls. What adds a thousand times to the ghastly turpitude of this satanic war is, that it is waged by two of the most civilised nations; and they, too, wearing the name of Him “who came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save.” War is bad at all times; it is bad in its *essence*; even under circumstances apparently the most justifiable, it is bad. “War,” says an old author, “is that miserable desolation that finds a land before it like Eden, and leaves it behind like Sodom and Gomorrah, a desolate

and forsaken wilderness. "Dr. Johnson laughed at Lord Kaine's opinion that war was a good thing occasionally, as so much valour and virtue were exhibited in it. 'A fire,' said the Doctor, 'might as well be considered a good thing. There is the bravery of the firemen in extinguishing it. And there, too, is much humanity exerted in saving the lives and properties of the poor sufferers. Yet, after all this, who can say that a fire is a good thing?'"

"Canons and firearms," said Luther, "are cruel and damnable machines, I believe them to have been the direct suggestion of the devil. Against the flying ball no valour avails: the soldier is dead ere he sees the means of his destruction. If Adam had seen, in a vision, the horrible instruments his children were to invent, he would have died of grief."

But it is easy and popular to give graphic descriptions of the horrors of war, and to denounce with an impassioned soul its abominations. Statesmen who sanction wars, despots who make them, popes and primates who consecrate the bloody flag, compose prayers for campaigns, and get conquerors monuments in churches and cathedrals will do this. But how few search for methods by which war can be put down; and how few even of those who, having discovered the methods, have that manly strength of moral conviction to openly advocate and honestly endeavour to work them out.

There are, we think, three methods at least adapted to crush this monster of war, and to banish it from the habitations of men. One is political, another is educational and the other is Christian. The one pertains to the science of government, the other to the science of teaching, and the other to the science of remedial mercy. The first is good, the second is better, the third is best of all—it is infallible. We shall notice each, but with the utmost brevity; and we shall do so, not to gratify any speculative tendency or political bias, but to discharge conscience of a weight that rests on it as a "burden of the Lord."



I. THE POLITICAL METHOD. There is, I think, a form of human government adapted not only to arrest the progress of this demon, but to bind him in indissoluble chains. What is it? *A cosmopolitan administration*, a great federal government for the world, a government which shall bear, with some modification, the same relation to all the present kingdoms of the earth, as the Government of America to all the States with which it is united, or as the various counties and boroughs of England to the British rule; such a government as should regulate the conduct, protect the rights, and sway the destinies of all alike the world over. One great world-embracing government. I care not where its seat might be—London, St. Petersburg, New York, Paris, Berlin, or Rome. Such a government as this, I know, is visionary to the eye of platitudinarian men—men who walk after the flesh and not after the spirit. It is nevertheless *possible*. The immense diversities existing in the language, habits, religions, and customs of the various races of the globe, and the great distances which some would necessarily be placed from the seat of empire, will be pleaded as an objection. But the answer is, that England has overcome all these difficulties long ago. The British rule extends over men of every variety of race, habits, and customs the world over. The sceptre wielded in London extends over every zone, and men at the antipodes bow loyally to its authority. The British Government stretches out in all directions, and is becoming more and more cosmopolitan every year. Nor is such a government merely possible, it is *probable*. The current of human affairs is tending to this, the smaller states are constantly being absorbed into the larger. “The restoration of nationalities,” were it expedient, would be impossible, it is against the resistless river of destiny. Where are the seven kingdoms that were once on this island? And where, too, are the kingdoms of Ireland, Wales, and Scotland? The English empire has absorbed them all. Poland,

Hungary, Sardinia, these and other kingdoms, too, have recently been absorbed by larger nations. The smaller states are constantly running into the larger, like streamlets into the river, and the largest river hastens to something larger still—the ocean. This is the law, and a cosmopolitan government, the “federation of the world,” as Tennyson has it, is not only possible but probable:—Aye, *inevitable*.

But how would such a world-wide Government “cause wars to cease from the ends of the earth?” In several ways. *It would promote free mercantile intercourse.* Commercial monopoly would cease; the markets of the world would be open to all alike—to men of every colour and clime. Free trade would reign the world over. Trade is a pacific element, men are not wont to quarrel with their customers. Mutual temporal interests, if not strong enough to bind hearts in harmony, are strong enough to yoke limbs and brains together in a common work. It would *lead to the destruction of nationalities*. Nationality is a “middle wall of partition” that keeps men asunder, and makes those on each side feel jealous and suspicious of the other. It is a false glass through which we look at other nations. A glass which magnifies their vices and minifies their virtues. Nationality is an insolent, swaggering, greedy, heartless monster on the earth. It is always big with its own ideas of *honour*, always in love with its own pageantry, always talks in great swelling words of vanity. It is pre-eminently selfish, boundlessly egotistic. “Our glorious constitution, our illustrious history, our invincible armies, our matchless resources.” This is the fashion of its talk. All this is mischievous and strife making. Destroy this miserable thing, and what then? Why, then you destroy one of the most mighty powers that stir up strife in the world, and you destroy, too, the necessity of those standing armies and navies whose ponderous weight sink whole countries into pauperism. Under such a Government men, the world over, would be fellow citizens, subject to the same laws, entitled to the same

rights. Warriors would be wanted no more—police would be alone required. But it is said, is not patriotism an instinct of human nature? And is it not right for a man to love his own country? What is patriotism? Is it love of territory, or love of man? If the former, is it not better to have the round earth as a sphere for our affections, than a little Denmark, a Belgium, or an Albion? If the latter, is it not better to love all men than a few? Philanthropy is the only true patriotism. It would lead, moreover, *to the abolition of despotic power*. Who are the men that create wars? Not the people—not the farmer, the manufacturer, not the mechanic, and the labourer; but the arrogant and ruthless despots who by villainy or fortune have gained their way to power. Such men would have but little power in a thoroughly cosmopolitan government. They might become lieutenants of counties, mayors of corporations, governors of colonies; but should they abuse their trust in these offices, they would be seized by the police, and visited with condign punishment.

Were we political agitators, which we are not, we should give our time and strength to nothing less than this. All other political questions seem to me contemptible in the presence of this. As a politician, I would work for this constitutionally, and by moral means—not in the spirit of disloyalty, for I reverence “the powers that be” of God’s ordaining, but in the spirit of Him who came to destroy all those partition walls that divide man from man, and to bind the race into one grand confederation. Politically, there will be no rest for the world until this grand ideal is realised.

“Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furled

In the parliament of man, the federation of the world,  
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.”

TENNYSON.

II. THE EDUCATIONAL METHOD. What is this method? The *indoctrinating* of men with a true knowledge of their

*duty*, their *rights*, and their *interest*. Whence is the knowledge of duty to be obtained? We are not left to the ethical writers of antiquity, nor to our own moral philosophisings. We have the revelation of an infallible ethical Teacher—One who was sent into the world by God to teach man his duty both to *himself* and his *fellow man*.

How does God require man to treat *himself*? Does He require him to give himself up to the dicta or rule of any or all of his fellow men, and so to barter himself away to others, as to make the will of his master, his general, or his king, the grand rule of his life? This the soldier does. Duty to him means obedience to his chief, nothing more. He is taught to believe that the will of his commander is his absolute rule; that he must yield everything up—friends, family, mind, body, life, all, at the behests of his General. He is an engine—is to have no heart, no sympathies, no aims of his own. He is the mere limb of a great plundering and murdering organization. Why have Napoleon of France and William of Prussia the power to marshal those teeming thousands that are now massed on the plains of Champagne to fight in bloody battle? Simply because these men have never been indoctrinated with the true idea of the duty they owe themselves. They have been taught the ethics of despots, not the ethics of Christ. Work into the people of the earth the conviction that all men are equal in the sight of God, that one man has rights as well as another, that each holds his being and his powers in trust from the Almighty, and must render to Him an account at last. And what then? Why then every man would respect his own individuality, employ his own individual talents, and work out his own individual beliefs, and despots would have to fight their own battles; men would no longer consent to be engines worked by tyrants. They would act as free men in the universe, not as slaves either in the camp or on the field.

How does God require a man to treat his *fellow man*? To deceive, defraud, disable, murder him? This is the

ethics of war. The golden rule is this—"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you"—a rule which agrees with the common sense and common conscience of humanity. Who would have another to delude, cheat, and destroy him? Who would not desire others to minister to his good, to help him on and up the path of a happy life? Were men permeated with this true idea of their obligation to their fellow-men, could war exist a day? No. Men would feel that war was not only a curse to the community, destroying the lives of men and the means of human support, creating misery in all directions, and entailing poverty on posterity, but also a huge crime before Almighty God.

But men should be indoctrinated not only with true ideas of their duties and rights, but also of their *interests*. War is a tremendous mistake, not only in morals, but in policy. In what does the interests of a nation consist? In the means of support, comfort, and education. On what do these depend? On the amount of a nation's skilled industry. Anything that checks productive industry is a national curse. This is so obvious that illustration is unnecessary. War is the greatest adversary to the prosperity of a community; war is destruction, both of the produce and of the producing power. The late Crimean war, for which our "nationality" raved with a mad enthusiasm a few years ago, which many of our pulpits advocated, and against which I lifted up my humble protest, cost England one hundred millions sterling. How much good to our country would this sum have done had it been saved and rightly employed.\* Truly has Cowper said, "That war is a game which, were their subjects wise, kings would not play at." Longfellow, with even still greater poetic fullness and force, has said—

"Were half the power that fills the world with terror,  
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,  
Given to redeem the human mind from error,  
There were no need of arsenals nor forts.

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\* See "Pulpit and its Handmaids," present number, p. 188.



“The warrior’s name would be a name abhorred,  
And every nation that should lift again  
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead  
Should wear for evermore the curse of Cain.”

Indoctrinate men with true ideas of their nature, rights, responsibilities—with the greatness of their possibilities, and the loftiness of their destiny, and you will put an end to war—you will sweep the ocean of its navies, shatter the artillery of armies, and transform the engines of human slaughter into the implements of honest and peaceful industry. Ideas are the true reformers. They sap the foundations of wrong, and build up the temples of right. True ideas are the seeds out of which all the wholesome institutions of a country grow, the fountains whence spring all its rivers of true liberty and life.

III. THE CHRISTIAN METHOD. What is this method? The *conquering of evil by good*. This is something higher than ethics, diviner than all mere human teaching. This is the essence of Christianity. On this principle Christ and His apostles acted. This was the burden of all their practical teaching. The returning of good for evil is sublime philosophy, as a means to put down all human enmity and antagonism. In mind, like does not cure like, but produces it—anger creates anger, war creates war. He that taketh the sword, shall perish of the sword. Christianity is essentially pacific. This may be argued from the teachings of the New Testament, from the biography of Christ, which is Christianity, and from the fact that its universal triumph will issue in universal peace.

To be a Christian is to be Christ-like, and he who is Christ-like must ever be an opponent to war, and a promoter of peace. Conventional Christianity has given its sanction to wars the most bloody through all times, and is, in many respects, worse than Deism. Its converts are only changed in their manners, not in their morals. As a believer in Christianity, nothing in society saddens my soul more than

to find ministers of the Gospel not only sanction but often advocate war. Paganism, in this, as well as other senses, is rampant in Christian churches.

Mr. Gladstone, the other day, in a speech on the restoration of St. Paul's Cathedral, said :—" I know not whether there are many here who have chanced to read a controversy which arose a long time ago between a polemical writer of our communion and the great Cardinal Wiseman, but the writer to whom I refer, a very zealous Protestant, undertook to bring a grievous reproach against the church of the Pantheon at Rome, a church certainly remarkable, on the whole, for the mildness of what I may call its peculiarly Romish emblems. This writer, however, criticised these emblems on account of what he called their heathenish character, and Cardinal Wiseman retorted upon him, I must say with a rejoinder that at least made my blood tingle and my cheeks blush. He said, ' You talk to us of the emblems that appear in the Pantheon ; *but what are the emblems that appear at St. Paul's ?* For the worship of what deity is that noble temple erected ? How often is it applied to the celebration of religious rites ? What indications does it convey in the symbols that are found there of the character of the Christian Gospel ? Look at the monuments with which its walls are occasionally studded ; look at the emblems which are found about its monuments. There is little fear that you will be reproached with an exaggerated Christianity, or with idolising those whose names are enrolled in the records of Gospel history. *It is the drum, the trumpet, and the cannon ;* it is every sign and symbol of civil and secular life, from which, and from which alone, you have selected the ornaments of your Cathedral, while in every other respect it remains, except as to its noble fabric and proportions, perfectly tame, and incapable of expressing the purpose for which it was designed.' I am not quoting the Cardinal's words, but I am giving the effect of what I remember to have read of his reply, and I do

trust the day has now arrived when this reproach is to be removed."

CONCLUSION.—Such are the methods that I consider suited to put an end to wars, to make them cease from the ends of the earth. I have stated them suggestively, not fully. I trust that some of my readers will employ greater powers, and more leisure than I possess to work them out. Meanwhile, let each discharge his responsibilities, and do his part, however humble, in grappling with this stupendous evil, man's chief devil in all ages and climes. Foul demon! during the last three weeks we are told that in the vicinity of Metz he has destroyed no less than 100,000 men; and his voracious maw is insatiate and insatiable—the more he devours, the more eager to devour—fresh blood whets his appetite, new groans intensify his rage. Nothing but his entire destruction must satisfy us. Let us begin in earnest. POLITICIANS! let nothing less "than the parliament of man and the federation of the world," be your master aim. Give this idea the clarion sound in all your speeches, lift it up before the nations; let it wave high as the rallying flag of the free, and progressive of all lands; its advent is inevitable; let us quicken its march. TEACHERS! indoctrinate your pupils with true ideas of man's rights, duties, and interests. Expurgate from your school-books all pagan ideas of human courage and human glory. My blood leapt into my brains as I saw this morning in my newspaper the words "the brilliant charge," "the brilliant attack," "the brilliant action." Brilliant, forsooth! brilliant only as the lurid flames of Tartarus are brilliant; brilliant only to the eyes of fiends. Away with these blasphemies from our literature, our speech, and our schools. CHRISTIANS! let us be Christians in spirit and in life, and then we shall be in constant antagonism to war.

# Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

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**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this **TERILIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The **ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

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## *Subject*: PHASES OF A PIOUS SOUL.

“Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.  
 O my God, I trust in thee:  
 Let me not be ashamed,  
 Let not mine enemies triumph over me.  
 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed:  
 Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.  
 Shew me thy ways, O Lord;  
 Teach me thy paths.  
 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me:  
 For thou art the God of my salvation;  
 On thee do I wait all the day.  
 Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses;  
 For they have been ever of old.  
 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions:  
 According to thy mercy remember thou me,  
 For thy goodness’ sake, O Lord.”—Psalm xxv. 1—7.

**HISTORY.**—This psalm is called a psalm of David; and we know of no circumstance that would justify a doubt on the subject. When it was composed, it is impossible to determine. It contains nothing to indicate any particular event in his history to call it forth. We may suppose, therefore, that the devout reflections and holy aspirations which it contains were the workings of his soul, when there was nothing much in his external circumstances to startle his nature, and to throw it from the

ordinary orbit of its devotions. The psalm itself is the first of the alphabetic or acrostic compositions of which there are six beside, viz., 34th, 37th, 111th, 112th, 119th, 125th. The peculiarity of this acrostic composition is that the first words of the several verses begin with the different Hebrew letters in their order. The letters in this Psalm, as well as in some others, are imperfect, arising either from errors of copyists, or because the author makes the form subordinate to the fuller expression of thought. It is supposed that the reason for adopting this acrostic order of composition was to assist the memory.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 1.*—"Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." "Unto thee, Jehovah, my soul will I lift up."—(*Alexander.*) The idea here is confident desire.

*Ver. 2.*—"O my God, I trust in thee." Here the writer expresses his trust in Jehovah the Eternal as his God—"my God." God gives Himself to the good, gives not only His promises, but His heart, His strength, His being. Love always gives itself to its object. Where two beings love each other with a perfect love, each calls the other his own. Hence, God calls the true man His, and the true man calls Him *his* God. "*Let me not be ashamed.*" "Ashamed" here perhaps means disappointed; it means, let not my hopes be frustrated. "*Let not mine enemies triumph over me.*" He had enemies; he trusted to God for deliverance from them, and he prays not to be disappointed.

*Ver. 3.*—"Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed." "He did not ask for any special dispensation on his part, but merely for a fair participation in God's mode of dealing with the whole class of which he was a member." "*Wait*" here denotes a loyal service. "*Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.*" Are there any which transgress with a cause? None. Sin everywhere in the universe is an unjustifiable thing. There is not any malevolence in this prayer: it means frustrate the plans of wicked men.

*Ver. 4.*—"Shew me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy paths." God's ways are His methods of action. God has a way of acting with all creatures, and all "His ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is He." (Deut. xxxii. 4.) It is important that man should know God's fixed methods of dealing with the race.

*Ver. 5.*—"Lead me in thy truth, and teach me:" God's truth here does not mean His revelation, but the truthfulness of His being, His faithfulness. And the prayer means a personal experience of that faithfulness. "*For thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*" The word "salvation" here is not to be understood in its evangelical sense, but merely in the sense of deliverance from danger and death. The Psalmist here avows his habitual reliance on God. "On thee do I wait all the day." A constant realisation of our dependence on God lies at the foundation of all true religion.

*Ver. 6.*—"Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old." The prayer for future favours is here



founded upon those already experienced. In the past of his life he had experienced the "tender mercies and the lovingkindnesses" of the Lord, and he prays for a continuance of those. "Remember." He had no idea, of course, that Omniscience could forget. All that he means is that God would continue to deal with him as He had already dealt.

*Ver. 7.*—"Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness sake, O Lord."

"In strong contrast with God, the Psalmist brings forward his own conduct and life. He could ask of God to remember His own acts—what He Himself had done: but could not ask Him to remember *his* conduct—*his* past life. He could only pray that this might be forgotten. He did not wish it to come into remembrance before God: he could not ask that God would deal with him according to that. He prays, therefore, that he might not be visited as he advanced in life with the fruits of his conduct in early years, but that all the offences of that period of his life might be forgiven and forgotten."

**ARGUMENT.**—This Psalm may be divided into two sections. (1.) The appeals of a devout soul to God. (Ver. 1—8, and 17—22.) (2.) The meditations of a devout soul upon God. (Ver. 8—17.)

**HOMILETICS.**—The sentiments contained in this Psalm are so distributed that it is difficult to bring the whole composition under a general formula. We think, however, that they fall pretty clearly into two distinct classes; namely, those devout states of mind which have to do with God in the first person, or directly; and those which have to do with God in the third person, or devout reflections upon Him. Two sections of this Psalm, viz., the first seven verses and the last five verses belong to the former division. Our attention now must be confined to those seven verses which head this article. They present to us certain phases of a pious soul. Here we have a pious soul rising to God, trusting in God, waiting upon God, and praying to God. Here we have—

I. A pious soul RISING TO GOD. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." Here we have an indication of the true elevation of man; what is it?

First: It is the elevation of the *soul*. By the soul the Psalmist undoubtedly means his rational and spiritual nature, that which was the Divinity within him; that which made him a man. The rising of this is the rising of man; the fall of this is the fall of man. One may rise in physical stature and strength, in secular possessions, in social influence, and even in

intellectual attainments, and yet, as a *man*, be amongst the most degraded in God's universe. It is only as the soul rises that the man really rises.

Secondly : It is the elevation of the soul *to God*. "Unto thee, O Lord." There are many who lift up their hands to the Lord, their eyes to the Lord, and their voices to the Lord, whose souls are prostrate on the black and dusty road of wickedness ; and there are those who lift up their souls to the gods of wealth, and fashion, and pleasure, but who never lift them up to the Lord. True elevation consists in the soul going up in devout thought, in holy gratitude, in sublime adoration, in moral assimilation to the infinite Jehovah. To soar towards Him is to soar into regions of imperishable beauty and cloudless day.

Thirdly : It is the elevation of the soul to God by *personal exertion*. "Do I lift up my soul ?" No man can lift up my soul for me. All the priests in the world cannot raise me an inch heavenward ; all the might of angels would be weakness here. If I am to reach the altitude of true greatness, I must climb from base to apex, step by step, myself. The lessons of the sage may raise my thoughts, the ministers of art may elevate my feelings and raise my imagination, but if my soul is to rise, I must lift it up myself. *How ?* By availing myself of the soul-elevating means which merciful heaven has vouchsafed through the Gospel. The Gospel is a ladder reaching from earth to heaven. I must raise myself from the dust, step on its first golden rungle, and thence on gradually to the top. God has made the ladder, God holds the ladder, and God says, "Come up hither." But I must scale the lofty heights myself. Here we have—

II. A pious soul TRUSTING IN GOD. "O my God, I trust in thee." True soul-elevation implies trusting in the Lord. It is only as we practically confide in Him that we can tower into the supernal heights of moral greatness. But what does trust in the Lord imply ? Always two things.

First : *A sense of dependency in the Truster*. Of all beings on the earth, man, perhaps, is the most dependent, although he does not always feel as he ought an adequate sense of this. His

dependency is the root of his trusting tendencies, and the more conscious he becomes of his dependence, the stronger those tendencies become. The human soul is like the ivy, always clasping at and twining around other objects for support. Hence, from this sense of dependency man everywhere is found trusting. There is only One Being in the universe that does not trust, and that is the Independent One. He relies on nothing outside Himself.

Secondly: *A belief in the sufficiency of the Trusted.* It is true that man trusts to objects concerning whose sufficiency he has not an intelligent belief. With a strange thoughtlessness of nature, he relies on objects utterly insufficient to sustain him. Yet where there is trust in God, there is always underlying it faith in His sufficiency.

God is the *only* sufficient object of human trust. In Him alone can all the powers, sympathies, and aspirations of the soul repose. He alone can sustain its immortal interests; He alone is equal to all its wants, possibilities, and emergencies, and all this for ever. All other objects of trust are felt to be insufficient sooner or later; the pillars crumble and the temple falls. But God is always a "Refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and are safe." I have read of a lark which, when pursued by a hawk, rushed into the bosom of a traveller; he kindly lodged the little refugee until he had walked a considerable distance, and the ravenous persecutor had disappeared, then he took it from his bosom, and held in on his hand for it to go free; forthwith it soared into the sun and poured its grateful music from the sky. It is thus with the soul that takes refuge in God. There it will hide until the dangers are all passed, and then go forth on seraphic wings into the azure regions of liberty and light. Here we have—

III. A pious soul WAITING UPON GOD. "On thee do I wait all the day."

First: To wait means *patience*. "All the days of my appointed time I will wait until my change come." "We have need of patience," &c. Our trials are great, and the promises

are tardy in their fulfilment. A bright morning is promised, but the hours of the dark and stormy night seem to hang as ages.

Secondly : To wait means *hope*. "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." (Sam. iii. 26.) "My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." Hope gives patience, and how much the good man has to hope for. We have to wait for His Son from heaven, &c.

Thirdly : To wait means *service*. Waiting is not inaction. To wait upon the Lord is to be in His service, to attend upon Him. We are to wait upon God as servants on their masters, as ministers on their sovereign. The value of our service, however, in relation to God is not to be estimated either according to the amount or results of our work. Men value the service of their servants in this way. He who does work most profitable to his master, is the servant most highly valued. The master inquires not into the motive or the state of his servant's heart in relation to him ; but motive alone gives value to work in God's service. "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord," &c. Here we have—

IV. A pious soul PRAYING TO GOD. "Let none that wait on thee be ashamed," &c. The prayer here extending from the third to the seventh verse falls into two divisions.

First: Prayer for *self*. This includes (1.) Prayer respecting Divine *deliverance*. "Let me not be ashamed." "Let not mine enemies triumph over me." The meaning of this is, "Let me not be vanquished, let not mine enemies overcome me, let all my hopes be realised." (2.) Prayer respecting Divine *guidance*. "Shew me thy ways, O Lord," &c. The three words here—"shew," "teach," "lead," may mean, (*a*), revealing the true—"shew" ; (*b*), indoctrinating into the true—"teach"—thoroughly instructing the mind in the eternal principles of right ; (*c*), conducting into the true—"Lead me in thy truth." A man may have a revelation of God's truth, may be instructed in God's truth, and yet not be practically led into the truth : this is God's work. "Lead me in thy truth." Christ promised His disciples the Spirit for this purpose. "He shall lead you into all truth." God leads His people into truth, as the father

leads his helpless child. (3.) Prayer respecting Divine *remembrance*. "Remember, O Lord," &c. Observe three things here. (a.) What he *would* have God to Remember. "Thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses, for they have been ever of old." He would have God to remember His past favours to him, that He might repeat them: he would have God act towards him as He had hitherto acted: his past experience bore testimony to God's kindness. Observe (b) what he would *not* have God to Remember. "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions." He himself remembers the "sins of his youth," and they gave him agony, but he desired the Almighty to become oblivious of them, to pass them by. Observe (c) *how* he would have God to Remember him. "According to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord." "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him."

Secondly: Prayer for *others*. He prays (1) For success to the good. "Let none that wait on thee be ashamed," let all that love thee prosper. (2.) For defeat to the wicked. "Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause." Confusion to wickedness!



#### INSTANCES OF ANSWERS TO PRAYERS.

1. Abraham's servant prays; Rebekah appears.—2. Jacob wrestles and prays; God's favour is won. Esau's mind is wonderfully turned from the revengeful purpose he had harboured for twenty years.—3. Moses cries to God; the sea divides.—4. Moses prays; Amalek is discomfited.—5. Joshua prays; Achan is discovered.—6. Hannah prays; Samuel is born.—7. David prays; Ahithophel hangs himself.—8. Asa prays; a victory is gained.—9. Jeosophat cries to God: God turns away his foes.—10. Isaiah and Hezekiah pray; 185,000 Assyrians are dead in 12 hours.—11. Daniel prays; the dream is revealed.—12. Daniel prays; the lions are muzzled.—13. Daniel prays; the seventy weeks are revealed.—14. Ezra prays; God answers. (Ezra viii. 21—23.)—15. Nehemiah darts a prayer; the king's heart is softened in a minute. (Nehem. xi. 6.)—16. Elijah prays; a drought of three years succeeds.—17. Elijah prays; rain descends apace.—18. Elijah prays; Jordan is divided.—19. Elijah prays; a child's soul comes back. Prayer reaches eternity.—20. The apostles pray; the Holy Ghost comes down.—21. The Church prays ardently in a prayer meeting; Peter is delivered by an angel.



## A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

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The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19—21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

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### *Subject:* SERVANTS AND THEIR MASTERS.

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing, that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."—Ephes. vi. 5—9.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 5.*—These five verses treat of the relative duties of masters and servants. "*Servants be obedient unto them that are your masters.*" Δοῦλος and κύριος are here relative terms, although in Greek the antithetical term to δοῦλος is commonly δεσπότης, as in 1 Tim. vi. 1, Titus ii. 9. Compare also 1 Pet. ii. 18. Δοῦλος, from δέω, to 'bind,' means a bondman, or slave, as distinguished from a hired servant, who was called μισθιος or μισθωτός. That such is its meaning here is plain, not only from the common usage of the word, but also from the antithesis between δοῦλος and ἐλευθερος, 'bond' and 'free' in ver. 8. Κύριος means possessor, owner, ἐκτελεῖ." (*Hodge.*) "According to the

*flesh.*" Here is the limitation of the obligation of the servant to his master, whether he is bond or free. The control of a master extends only over the body. His claim is only to bodily service. He has no rightful authority over the conscience and the soul. "*With fear and trembling.*" This does not mean a timid, tremulous servility, but rather conscientious solicitude. A true servant should have no cringing, crouching spirit in relation to his master, but evermore a reverential fear of God. Paul tells us that he came amongst the Corinthians "with fear and trembling;" he speaks of their having received Titus "with fear and trembling," and he exhorts men to work out their salvation "with fear and trembling." "*In singleness of your heart.*" "The word ἀπλοτης signifies 'singleness' from ἀπλός, onefold, as opposed to διπλός, twofold, or double. The thing enjoined is, therefore, the opposite of doublemindedness." (Hodge.) "*As unto Christ.*" All duties, even the most menial, should be rendered as unto the Lord. Every act of every man should be religious. The whole life should be a psalm.

Ver. 6.—"*Not with eye-service as men pleasers.*" This explains the meaning of the previous clause, simplicity of heart, and is by implication a condemnation of coercive servitude. A slave that is driven by his master's will, renders mere, as a necessity, "eye-service," and nothing more. "*But as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.*" Whatever the servant does, whether he be bond or free, he should have regard for the will of God, and do it "from the heart." He must be conscientious in all.

Ver. 7.—"*With good will doing service.*" Here is summed up that which gives moral worth to all service, viz., its consecration to the Lord.

Ver. 8.—"*Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*" Alford renders this verse thus:—"Knowing that each man, if he shall have done any good thing, shall receive the same from the Lord, whether he be bondman or free." Whatever there is good in any man's action, however obscure, or however persecuted and oppressed he may be, there is One that recognizes the good in it, and rewardeth him. "He shall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."

Ver. 9.—"*And ye masters do the same thing unto them.*" The meaning of this is, not, of course, that masters are to do the same things for their servants as their servants do for them, but that they, in everything like their servants, should have regard to the will of God. "*Forbearing threatening.*" Here again is a blow to slavery, and to all coercive service. If the slaveholder and the tyrant renounce all menace, they would lose their power as such. "*Knowing that your Master also is in heaven.*" "Knowing that their Master and yours is in heaven." (Alford.) "*Neither is there respect of persons with him.*" The great Master of all is rigorously impartial.

HOMILETICS.—There are two thoughts underlying these verses. First: The existence of social distinctions amongst men. There

are masters and servants, rulers and subjects. These distinctions are no accidental phases of society, they grow out of the constitution of things. Diversity in the temperaments, tastes, capacities, and circumstances of men give rise to masters and servants. Secondly : The one spirit which is to govern men of all distinctions. The rich and the poor, the sovereign and his subject, the master and the servant, are under an obligation to be animated by the same moral spirit, and controlled by the same moral consideration. "All in all things should do the will of God from the heart."

I. THE DUTY OF SERVANTS. The duty of servants, of course, is obedience. "Be obedient to them that are your masters." But the obedience is here characterised. First : It is obedience in *bodily matters*. "According to the flesh." Their service is limited to secular concerns, things that have reference to the material and temporal interests of their masters. They were to give their muscles, and their limbs, and their contriving faculties, but not their souls. "Consciences and souls were made to be the Lord's alone." Secondly : It is obedience *honestly rendered*. "With fear and trembling, in singleness of heart"—"not with eye-service." These expressions mean that there should be no duplicity, no double dealing, but downright honesty in everything. A servant is bound to be honest towards his employer. He has no right to be lazy or wasteful. He has contracted to give, on certain stipulated conditions, his energies and time to promote the secular interests of his master. Thirdly : It is obedience *inspired with the religious spirit*. They are to regard themselves in everything as the servants of Christ, and are bound to do the "will of God from the heart." In everything the authority of Christ must be held as supreme. Whatsoever is done in word or deed should be done all to the glory of God. Fourthly : It is obedience which if truly rendered *will be rewarded of God*. "Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." The faithful servant may feel that the wages he receives from his earthly master are unjustly inadequate. Yet the Great Master will award to him at last an ample compensation. Whatsoever good thing he has done, however trivial, shall meet its

reward at last. The good thing must be rewarded. Goodness carries evermore its own reward.

II. THE DUTY OF MASTERS. The way in which masters should exercise their authority is here indicated. First : They are to exercise it *religiously*. "Ye masters, do the same things unto them." "The same things," as we have said, do not mean the same work, but the same spiritual attributes. Servants are to be honest, and respect the will of God in all ; the masters are here bound to do "the same things." Both are to be under the domination of the same moral spirit. Secondly : They are to exercise it *magnanimously*. "Forbearing threatening." Though the servant may by accident, or, what is worse, by intent, by omission, or by commission, try severely the temper of his master, his master should forbear threatening. He should show his right to be a master by governing his own soul. The man who takes fire at every offence, whose eyes flash with rage, and lips mutter threats, is too little a creature to be a master. He has no license from heaven to rule either children, servants, or citizens, who is not magnanimous in soul. Thirdly : They are to exercise it *responsibly*. "Knowing that your Master also in heaven." They are amenable to God for the way in which they use their authority. The master has the same Lord as the servant, and they must stand at last together at the great tribunal. To that Master all social distinctions vanish in the presence of moral character. "Neither is there respect of persons with Him."

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#### EXAMPLES OF MASTERS.

"THERE is a currency of untruth in daily use amongst fashionable people for purposes of convenience, which proceeds to a much bolder extent than the form of well understood falsehood, by which the middle classes also, not perhaps without some occasional violation of their more tender consciences, excuse themselves from receiving a guest. Fashionable people, moreover, are the most unscrupulous smugglers and buyers of smuggled goods, and have less difficulty than others and less shame in making various illicit inroads upon the public property and revenue. It is not to be denied that these practices are, in point of fact, a species of lying and cheating ; and the better of them bears a close analogy to the sort of depredation in which the dishonesty of a servant commonly commences. To a servant it must seem quite as venial an offence to trench upon the revenues of a duke as to the duke it may seem to defraud the revenues of a kingdom. Such proceedings, if not absolutely to be branded as dishonest, are not at least altogether honourable : they are such as may be more easily excused in a menial than in a gentleman."—TAYLOR.

# Germs of Thought.

## VISIONS OF GOD.—No. III.

*Subject: ELIJAH'S VISION.*

“And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks, before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake: but the Lord was not in the earthquake,” &c.—1 Kings xix. 11—21.

*Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Ninety-second.*

I. THE MAN HIMSELF. A great craggy soul that towers above the men of his age—his head wreathed in the glories of heaven. But though standing out from the age in which he lives as one of God's Elect—yet a man with a human heart capable of rejoicing and despondency even as others. What a lonely and depressing thing it must be to stand before an age and nation as the representative of the right, the pure, the true, at a time when men were being corrupted by a licentious court, and an immoral priesthood! There are very few men equal to this. Elijah was one of the good and glorious few. He was qualified by God. There is no doubt as to the *source* of his power. And how noble a thing to use power well! Elijah represents the power of God; Ahab the power of man—that is the power of high position and great opportunity *perverted*. Elijah was the advocate of the unpopular side. The king was against him. Worse still, the commanding beauty and imperious will of an unprincipled queen was against him. Worst of all, there was an established priesthood against him. A corrupted court is bad enough. A corrupted priesthood is far worse. With what watchword did Elijah contend against these adverse influences? “*As the Lord liveth.*” Realize a living, ever-present God, and you will not lack power. Elijah was the truest patriot, because the holiest man.

II. HIS DREAD MISSION. To be the agent of Divine judgments. He was filled with righteous indignation at seeing the



old worship of his country—the trust in the one living God—superseded by a religion which was but a form of Paganism. And the God of Israel, who was a jealous God—jealous of the affections of his people being turned aside to another—empowered the prophet to do the terrible work of destruction. It seems an awful thing to us that this man should have caused all the prophets of Baal to be slain. Some have not scrupled to affirm that in this deed Elijah exceeded his prophetic commission. I think not. The voice of God spake through him. It was needful that the anger of Jehovah should be illustrated by some deed which should shake the nation to its very centre. The only chance of saving the nation was to destroy the men who were the hired corruptors of the people. The people were suffering. There was famine at their doors. Their cattle were dying. What meant such dire calamities? Elijah must teach the people, as best he could, what they meant. God will not let men alone to have their own way. Jehovah makes one man stronger than an army to do the terrible deed of Retribution upon the men who were robbing Him of His people.

III. THE VISION OF GOD. When Elijah had done the terrible deed of blood, the re-action of spirit was so great—the dejection so overwhelming that he was glad to get away from all society into a desert place to pray that he might die. Elijah's anger had been the flaming forth of deep passionate love. The love of God sometimes flames forth in flashes of anger which make the very earth to reel and stagger. What is God's justice but his Love flashing out in angry Retribution? Never argue, as so many do, that because God is Love, therefore He will not punish sin.

Elijah has no sooner done the deed than he is full of despondency. He flies from his work—his heart sore and bleeding within him—lonely—companionless. "I, even I, only am left." "Take away my life."

The reward of work is granted the prophet and vision of Jehovah. From that vision he learns that God is not such an one as the deed the prophet has been compelled to do, under a mighty inspiration, might represent Him to be. The storm is not the mouth of God. Nor the earthquake. Nor the fire.

Jehovah is not a Destroyer. The still small voice best represents Him. For He is an Inspirer.

“The storm is o’er—and hark! a still small voice  
Steals on the ear to say, Jehovah’s choice  
Is ever with the soft, meek, tender soul:  
By soft, meek, tender ways He loves to draw  
The sinner, startled by His ways of awe:  
Here is our Lord, and not where thunders roll.”

Expect not to find the presence of God half so much in that which indicates *power*, or *fury*, or *destruction*, as in that which is gentle and loving and persuasive. We must look away from kings and their armies for emblems of God. When the minds of men were coarse and savage Jehovah revealed himself as “a man of war”—trampling the nations in his fury. Not so, however, does he reveal himself to his obedient children. His working is like the light—like the still breeze—noiseless as the sunrise which would not wake a sleeping babe—yet so life-giving that sleepy nature begins to dress herself and come forth in the vestments of spring.

Learn—1. *That in terrible crises of life the faithful man may look for some special vision of God.*

2. *To distinguish between blind zeal which destroys, and intelligent zeal which edifies.*

3. *That while the Might of Jehovah is used to crush wrong, the Voice of Love is needful to build up men in Righteousness.*

London.

R. THOMAS, M.A.



*Subject: THE WORLD’S LIGHT. — No. II.*

“Ye are the light of the world.”—Matt. v. 14.

*Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Ninety-third.*

SET over against that other utterance of Christ, “I am the light of the world”—First: Does not our text *impugn its author’s consistency*? Are not the two statements contradictory? Nature answers, no. Suppose the chief luminary of this material earth to use the statements as descriptive of the office which

he, *and* the other bodies of the solar system, including our moon, perform for us; would there be any inconsistency in that case? Christians are Christ's satellites, earth's stars and moons. Secondly: Does not this text *establish a human priesthood in the Church?* Yes, and no. A priesthood of influence, not of authority, of illumination, not of lordship; a priesthood co-extensive with the spiritual Church, to comprehend all true disciples. Our text—

I. IMPLIES A PERMANENT SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP EXISTING BETWEEN CHRIST AND HIS FOLLOWERS. This relationship is not, first, a piece of dogmatic fiction; nor, secondly, a mere metaphysical abstraction; nor is it, thirdly, a mere ethereal sentiment. To Christians it is a conscious subjective reality; to the world it presents an objective manifestation. For a description of the nature of this relationship, see John xiv. and xv. There, and elsewhere, we learn that it is a *direct and vital relationship of spiritual nature, functions, and powers*, and that on the human side it is *dependent, subordinate, representative*. It implies the necessity of—

First: *Certain affinities of nature with Christ*. This relation is not merely official, nor is it in any way artificial, but natural. The sun and the minor members of the solar system are found to be homogeneous. "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

Secondly: *Spiritual purification*. Our measure of light will ever depend greatly upon the clearness and sensibility of our spiritual perceptive and receptive capacities. All the glass in optical instruments, whether they are intended for scientific purposes, or for mere ordinary use, should be free from dross. Again, vapours rising from the earth form themselves into clouds, which obstruct the sun's rays in the atmosphere.

Thirdly: *Permanent spiritual stability*. Imagine the confusion of the material universe, were the huge bodies which composed its stellar systems to break from their moorings, and roll away from their orbits through infinite space! Shall Christians be wandering stars, now floating in the high heaven of spiritual splendour, and now whirling madly away into the outer darkness of non-communion with the Sun of Righteousness?

Fourthly: *Elevated spiritual life.* Some Christians, skirting the outer verge of the kingdom of heaven, remind us rather of Uranus and Neptune, than of Sol's favourite, Mercury, ever dwelling in the inner court of the supernal temple of his glory. Our text—

II. IMPLIES A WORK ENTAILED BY CHRIST UPON HIS FOLLOWERS. "Ye are the light of the world." According to these words the Christian is—

First: *A reflector* of the spiritual light that shines upon him. Some material substances are opaque, and absorb the light; they are fit emblems of those who live unto themselves. The Christian, like the mirror and the placid lake, reflects the light, *and its source.* He is—

Secondly: *A reproducer* of this light. In this age true Christian morality is rather *represented* to the world than *presented*. What we have is traditional, conventional, galvanic, rather than living and life-giving. Just as mere mechanical motivity is a higher condition of matter than inertia, but is not life, so there is a passive Christianity, a mechanical, automatic thing, which is, perhaps, better than dead inaction, but is not the vital thing that Christianity should be. Take a figure from the literature of mineralogy. Combustible matter is light incarnate. Down in the deep coal-mines, for example, have the sun's rays been buried for myriads of ages; kindle the coal, and they escape from their dark prison, and enter upon their beneficent mission instantly. Permeating the surrounding space, they raise the depressed temperature with their genial warmth, and chase the darkness with their cheering light. Thus should the Christian life, kindled by the Holy Spirit, reproduce the moral rays of the divine sun in the world. The matter becomes, then, one of internal, natural volition, not of external constraint. Tapers illumine the darkness because they cannot possess the light without doing so. The Christian is—

Thirdly: *A prism*, analytically solving this moral light, and exhibiting its beauties of colour. By means of the spectroscopic light is reduced from a mystery to a commonplace, its elements are distinguished and separated, while its splendours are displayed, and made to discourse to us of the constitution of inconceivably

distant worlds. The Christian is God's human spectroscope, both for solving the mysteries and displaying the splendours of "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" as shining from the face of Jesus Christ. May not the colours of light be regarded as typical of (1.) *True culture*. True men do not fear culture, but encourage it. Only the *lack* and *partiality* of culture can endanger truth. Humanity can only reach its perfect state of development through the unrestricted culture of all its powers in their due order and natural relationships. (2.) *Intelligent faith*. Faith and culture diverse, but not contradictory—two colours of the same essential light. The *human* culture possible without faith almost none; and the highest culture found to be in perfect harmony with the most vigorous faith. (3.) *Living spirituality*. (4.) *Christ-like love*. This the central colour. (5.) *Moral purity*. (6.) *Devout worship*. (7.) *Beneficent activity*. The success of the Church must ever depend greatly upon the clearness with which these colours of "the light of the glorious gospel" are displayed to the world in the lives of her members; then it follows that her failures in the different ages have been due to the dimness of certain—now some, now others—of these colours—due, that is, to the imperfections of the *prismatic qualities* of the Church as a spiritual body, and of its individual members.

Fellow-Christian, examine the light of thy life as one who shall have to give account. Let not the light that is in thee be darkness; neither be thou an *ignis fatuus*, leading poor souls astray. Be not a flashing meteor, exciting transitory curiosity with thy blaze of profession. Rather let it be thy ambition to be, by Christ-likeness, a quiet, clear, effective medium of "that Light which lighteth every man," &c. The dense, black clouds that overshadow the home, the neighbourhood, the nation, should be rendered luminous by a glory proceeding from thee, and even the tears of thy deepest griefs may be prisms casting a bow of brilliant hope upon the dark background of this troublous life. In whatever relative position sin may stand to thee, let it meet the light of heaven in some bright hue of moral beauty. Put to shame subtle deception by honesty and frankness open as the day. Pierce the thick darkness of selfishness with the light of Christ-like disinterested love. Meet gross



sensuousness with purity of life and heavenly conversation ; and dissipate black despair with contagious smiles of radiant hope, which point straight to the Mercy-seat of the Father. Strive thus to destroy the moral ills of humanity by means of their opposites, and thou wilt experience the highest possible enjoyment of man on earth—the blissful consciousness of being a light in the world.

SAMUEL SLOCOMBE.

*North Petherton, Somerset.*



*Subject: WHERE IS LIFE?*

“In His [God’s] favour is life.”—Psa. xxx. 5.

*Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Ninety-fourth.*

**W**HETHER there are many different opinions as to the place of true enjoyment. Some think it is in animal gratifications ; others in material possessions ; mental acquirements ; personal refinements ; social positions ; and some even in present creature pleasures.

The Psalmist thought it to be in the favour of God. And he was right. Until man is in friendship with God he will never be happy. Whatever else he is, or has, he is miserable, so far, and so long, as he is unlike Him and at variance with Him. To be at rest, and have joy, man must be born of God. Unless he is renewed by Divine agency, man will ever be bad in character, and barren of blessedness. This will more fully appear from answers to questions respecting the Divine favour referred to in the text.

I. WHAT SORT IS IT ? Not the *creative* favour of God, which has made us men, not brutes ; not His *providential* favour, which has supplied our various needs—but His *saving* favour, which alone has pitied us in our sins and sinfulness, and provided to deliver us from both, and to make us holy and righteous, thereby to fit us for union and communion with Himself. (Eph. ii. 4 to 7.) That the Psalmist had this favour of God in view, is

evident from the 8th verse, and from the tenor of his fine brief poem.

II. THROUGH WHAT MEDIUM DOES GOD EXERCISE HIS SAVING FAVOUR ? Jesus Christ. (John xvii. 2, Acts iv. 12, Rom. iii. 25, 26, 1 John v. 11.) Hence the necessity of going to Christ and cleaving to Him with the whole mind, and throughout all time ; of learning of Him as the Prophet of God ; of trusting Him as the Priest of God ; of obeying Him as the King of God ; and of imitating Him as the Pattern of God. Jesus is to the regeneration of man, what the atmosphere is to the fruitfulness of the earth,—the medium through which the water of the ocean, and the warmth of the sun act with generating power. No atmosphere, sun and ocean would both be useless ; and no Jesus, the infinite favour—the boundless love of God—would do us no saving good, could not prevent our perishing.

“None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
Can do helpless sinners good.”

III. WHERE IS THIS FACT REVEALED ? In the Bible. (Deut. xviii. 15, 18 ; Luke xxiv 27 ; John v. 39.) This invests the Scriptures with indescribable grandeur, inestimable worth, exclusive authority, and final appeal in every thing pertaining to human redemption ; and, as man is individually accountable to God, lays man under individual obligation to acquaint himself with God through His Son, by His word. Bible believers should translate it into all human tongues, and urge all to study and practise it. The saving favour of God can be known and had only by means of Scripture.

IV. TO WHOM IS IT PROCLAIMED ? Some restrict the proclamation of Divine grace. This is opposed alike to the genius, form, and practice of the Bible. Jesus connects the saving love of God with the world. (John iii. 16.) Angels declare that the “good tidings” of “Christ the Lord” were for all people. (Luke ii. 10.) Those tidings have been given in a way that fits in with the actual condition of every human being. (Matt. ix. 13 ; Titus ii. 11 to 14.) The whole stream of Scripture thought regards God as in personal sympathy with individual man ; and as ready to elp, and bless, and save one as well as another

of mankind. To limit Gospel invitations to a favoured few is unscriptural and unevangelical. The idea of it belongs to the same class of groundless, arbitrary thought, as that which insists on the Divine right of kings, and of all forms of exclusive privilege ; and should be relegated to the limbo of baseless assumptions in general.

V. WHAT WILL BE HAD BY SUITABLY REGARDING God's proclamation of His saving favour ? " Life." That is, restoration to the moral likeness of God, reinstatement into right relations with God, and introduction into the real friendship of God. Jesus calls it " life," " eternal life." The blessing is differently designated according to different aspects of God. Viewed in regard to the *law* of God, it is called *justification*. (Gal. iii. 6 to 14) ; the *character* of God, *sanctification* ; (Eph. v. 25 to 27) ; the *person* of God, *fellowship* (John xvii. 21 ; 1 John i. 3, 6, 7). All living is death which is not *in* God, nor *like* Him, nor *according to His will*.

VI. BY WHAT EXERCISE OF THE MIND do we obtain the blessed issues of God's saving favour ? Believing. This word describes a complex and not a simple use of mind. It includes *perception*, namely, of evidence of fact ; *trust* or *confidence* in the truth of evidence ; *resolution* to act according to truth ; *expectation* of good corresponding to the truth acted upon. Believing of this kind is associated with every saving act of God. For example : *Forgiveness*. (Acts x. 43.) *Justification*. (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) *Birth of God*. (John i. 12, 13.) *Sanctification*, initial and progressive. (Acts xv. 9 ; xxvi. 18.) *Perseverance* in the Divine life. (John xi. 25, 26 ; Rom. i, 17.) Hence, faith is the grand *requirement* of the Gospel, the great *duty* of the sinner, the *distinguishing feature* of the saint, the unfailing accompaniment of salvation ; and in Scripture, is identified with every exercise of the soul in seeking a personal interest in the redeeming work of God—in His saving favour.

Preston.

W. J. STUART.



*Subject: THE WAR; OR, GOD'S GIFT OF QUIETNESS TO  
NATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS.*

"When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only."—Job xxxiv. 29.

*Analysis of Homily the Eight Hundred and Ninety-fifth.*

**C**OMPARING the utterances of Elihu with those of Job's other friends, we cannot but feel that "the strain was of a higher measure." He ascended towards the height of the great argument in relation to God's Providence.

The text expresses the greatness of the gift by God of quietness and vision to individuals and to nations. The quietness is in connexion with the unhidden light of God's face, which is the antidote to trouble. The withdrawal of the light of God's face from a man or a nation induces unquiet.

I. THE QUIETNESS OF A MAN OR A NATION IS GOD'S GIFT.  
"When he giveth quiet."

First: *Quietness of spirit.* For a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price. But man is weary and heavy laden until Christ gives him rest. Spiritual quietude is the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Disturbing thoughts of God, of man, of nature, of futurity, are only corrected by the internal presidency of God's Spirit in the soul and spirit of man.

Secondly: *Quietness of social life.* The family and community which fear God are the abodes of peacefulness and of harmonious co-operation with God and man. "And "When a man's ways please the Lord He maketh his enemies to be at peace with him." The fellowship of saints is peace.

Thirdly: *National quietness.* Developement of a nation's life *inner and outer.* The condition of prosperity is peace. War weakens the resources which are accumulated by peace. blood and treasure are sacrificed in war, which is ever professedly waged to obtain peace.

II. TROUBLE IS OVERCOME BY GOD'S GIFT OF QUIETNESS TO PERSONS AND TO NATIONS.

First: *Trouble to a man is prevented by quietness.* Silent endeavour is productive, and resists the invasions of noisy indolence and excess of riot. It is in the midst of the supreme silences that man best apprehends God by pure thought under the guidance of God's Spirit.

Secondly: *Trouble to a nation is resisted by quietness.* "Peace hath her victories too." A nation wherein all hands are at work, and all tongues for the most part silent, save when wise speech is called for, is the best opposer of war. The multiplication of armies and of arms induces disquietude and begets suspicion. "Armed neutrality" is a kind of covert threatening of war, albeit, the arming of one nation is the temptation of another to arm also. Is not the hiding of God's face from a nation because of its evils indicated by war? "Sin is a reproach to any people," and sin brings war.

III. THE UNHIDDEN FACE OF GOD MAY BE BEHELD BY MAN OR NATION. "When He hideth," &c.

First: *God's face is hidden from the guilty conscience, but unveiled to the pure.* Evil in the heart and life darkens heaven and earth. The ancient prayers of the penitent were, "Hide not the light of Thy countenance." "Lift Thou upon us the light of Thy countenance."

Secondly: *God's face is hidden from "a sinful nation" but beheld by righteous people.* The nation of Israel wandered in darkness when God hid His face from it. Peoples conquered it. Captivity was the consequence of idolatry. But when the nation turned to God by fasting and prayer and reformation, God lifted the light of His face in forgiveness upon it. So now with nations, England, Prussia, France, &c.

IV. THE HIDING OF GOD'S FACE IS THE GREATEST TROUBLE TO A PERSON OR TO A PEOPLE.

First: *The trouble of unrest.* "The wicked is like the troubled sea," &c. The spirit is restless in separation from God and intercourse with Him. Disquietude and darkness are "against" a man or nation. Unrighteousness in persons and



peoples antagonises God, who declares that "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God."

Secondly : *The trouble of blindness.* "Gross darkness covers the minds of the people." National blindness. "The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then *peaceable*," &c., for a nation. In Divine light a nation advances in wisdom and goodness. Rashness rushes onwards to ruin. More light is that which a nation needs for its legislation, that it may be a wise and understanding people.

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## The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

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The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbiages; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

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No. IX.—JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

*Subject:* THE FOOLISH EXCHANGE.

"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—Matt. xvi. 26.

**F**OR the soul of man, all the world cannot be a just price : a man may lose it, or throw it away, but he can never make a good exchange. When he parts with this jewel, therefore, Christ expresses it well by *ζημιον*, loss, which is fully opposed to *κερδος*, gain. It is such an ill market a man makes as if he should proclaim his riches and goods vendible for a garland of thistles, decked and trimmed up with the stinking poppy. We shall better understand the nature of this bargain if we consider—

I. THE SOUL IN ITS OWN CAPACITY FOR HAPPINESS. The soul has an excellency greater than the sun, of angelic substance, sister to the cherubim, and image of the divinity. God made it by a new idea of his own, an uncreated exemplar. It is not the eye that sees the beauty of the heaven, nor the ear that

hears the sweetness of music, but the soul that perceives all the relish of sensual and of intellectual pleasure. To lose a soul which is designed to be an immense sea of pleasure, even in its natural capacities, is to lose all that whereby a man can possibly be happy. Consider—

II. THE PRICE THAT THE SON OF GOD PAID FOR THE REDEMPTION OF THE SOUL. WHAT? Not the spoil of rich provinces, nor the estimate of kingdoms, nor the estimate of Cleopatra's draught, nor anything corruptible. For the salvation of the soul, God did a greater work than in creation. He was fain to contract Divinity into a span; He gave His Son to die. A soul in God's account is valued at the price of the blood, and shame, and torture of His Son. A soul is so greatly valued by God that we are not to venture the loss of it to save all the world. If God for His own sake would not have all the world saved by sin—that is, by the hazarding of a soul—we should do well for our own sakes not to lose a soul for trifles. Consider—

III. WHAT IT IS TO LOSE A SOUL. Hierocles thus explicates—“An immortal substance can die, not by ceasing to be, but by losing all well-being, by becoming miserable.” Hell-fire is the common expression for the loss of the soul, for the Eastern nations counted burning the greatest punishment; and burning malefactors was frequent. “Brimstone and fire,” so St. John calls punishment. Also “outer darkness,” “blackness of darkness for ever,” “where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,” “unquenchable fire.” If a man were condemned to lie in bed in one posture, without turning for seven years, would he not buy it off with the loss of all his estate. A thousand years is a long time to be in torment. Although Homer was pleased to compliment the beauty of Helena to such a height as to say, “It was a sufficient price for all the evils which the Greeks and Trojans suffered in ten years,” yet it was a more reasonable conjecture of Herodotus, that during the ten years siege of Troy, Helena, for whom the Greeks fought, was in Egypt, not in the city; because it was unimaginable but the Trojans would have thrown her over the walls, rather than, for the sake of a trifle, have endured so great calamities. We are more sottish than the Trojans if we retain our Helena, any one

beloved lust, a painted devil, and sugared temptation, with (not the hazard, but) the certainty of having such horrid miseries, such incalculable losses. The old rabbins, those poets of religion, report of Moses, that when the courtiers of Pharaoh were sporting with the child Moses in the chamber of Pharaoh's daughter, they presented to his choice an ingot of gold in one hand, and a coal of fire in the other; and that the child snatched at the coal, thrust it into his mouth, and so singed and parched his tongue that he stammered ever after. And certainly it is infinitely more childish in us for the glittering small glowworms, and the charcoal of worldly possessions, to swallow the flames of hell greedily in our choice; such a bit will produce a worse stammering than Moses had; for so the accursed and lost souls have their ugly and horrid dialect. Although God hath lighted His candle, and the lantern of His word, and clearest revelation is held out to us, that we can see hell in its worst colours, and most horrid representments, yet we run greedily after baubles under that precipice which swallows up the greatest part of mankind; and then only we begin to consider when all consideration is fruitless.

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

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GREATNESS OF THE SOUL.

"THE soul endowed with understanding, reason, wit, judgment, will, memory, imagination; the soul, which in an instant flieth from pole to pole, descends to the centre, and mounts up to the top of the world; which in one instant is in a thousand several places; which fathoms the universe without touching it; which glows, glistens, sparkles; which ransacks all the treasures and magazines of nature; which finds out all sorts of inventions; which frameth arts, which governeth states, which ordereth worlds."—N. CAUSSIN.

INFLUENCE OF GOLD ON THE SOUL.

"A LIGHTED piece of paper laid flat on a piece of metal will go out, for the metal absorbs the heat and starves the flame: so does gold laid close to the soul cause the holy flame of love to God to shrink and die. The heart cannot embrace both God and money; and therefore, if it give its affection and solicitude to the latter, it is guilty of idolatry. (Col. iii. 5)."

## Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXII.

*Subject: THE WRATH OF THE LAMB.*

“And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.”  
—Rev. vi. 16.

THERE is something of appalling significance in so paradoxical an expression as this, of the “Wrath of the Lamb.” The Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world; the Lamb that stood as it had been slain; the Lamb brought dumb to the slaughter: the Lamb in whose blood were made white the robes of them that came out of great tribulation;—to associate with this image the utterly antagonistic idea of wrath, involves surprise, not to say shock, as well as reluctant effort. Once associated, the very antagonism of the conflicting terms imparts to their conjunction a portentous expressiveness. It makes the wrath trebly potent that it should be wrath, long suppressed, but at length discharged, of a nature essentially and exceptionally meek, patient, long-suffering, easy to be entreated, hard to be angered.

In the previous chapter the same Divine Personage apparently had been symbolized as a Lion—the Lion of the tribe of Judah. It might have seemed, to the superficial, greatly more appropriate to have spoken of His wrath under this character—the wrath of a Lion. But how infinitely less striking, and every-way less suggestive, would this have been than the actual, and supremely forcible, expression, the wrath of the Lamb! The deferred and deprecatèd, but at last inevitable day of its manifestation arrived, who might abide it? The great day of His wrath come, who should be able to stand?

*Furor fit læsâ sæpius patientiâ*, says the Latin proverb: patience, trespassed upon too often, is converted into wrath.

And if, O patience, the long-suffering that is in thee becomes wrath, how great is that wrath! Plutarch says of the Roman populace, on the occasion of a certain tumult, "they thought that the wrath of Fabius now provoked, albeit he was naturally so mild and patient, would prove heavy and implacable"—all the more so, indeed, because of that natural disposition, now abused and overstrained. An eminent critic observes, in arguing that all great effects are produced by contrast, that anger is never so noble as when it breaks out of a comparative continence of aspect; it is the earthquake bursting from the repose of nature.

Gibbon observes that the most furious and desperate of rebels are the sectaries of a religion long persecuted, and at length provoked.

Charlevoix in his *Histoire de St. Domingo*, remarks of the sea of the Antilles and neighbouring isles, that it is commonly more tranquil than ours; "but, like certain people who are excited with difficulty, and whose transports of passion are as violent as they are rare, so when the sea becomes irritated, it is terrific." To apply Barry Cornwall's lines:

"Look well upon 't:

'Tis the same murmuring creature scarce surmounts  
The pebbles on our beach; only, being wrought  
To madness by some wrong, or the moon's scorn,  
It jumps from its calm, and scales the skies, to show  
What strength it may have when angered."

The biographer of Columbus and his companions is treating of the native Indians of those tropical islands when he says, "At length, by a series of flagrant outrages, the gentle and pacific nature of this people was roused to resentment, and from confiding and hospitable hosts they were converted into vindictive enemies." Mr. Perceval tells us of the Cingalese Indians, "They are mild, and by no means captious or passionate, . . . though, when once their anger is roused, it is proportionably furious and lasting." It is a recognized characteristic of the Turks that, although not lightly provoked to anger, yet, when once thoroughly excited, their passion is furious and their resent-



ment deadly. Great Britain herself is by some referred to the same category. Wolcot writes on this subject,

“Thick as may be the head of poor John Bull,  
The beast hath got some brains within his skull;  
A pair of dangerous horns too, let me add,  
Dare but to make the generous creature mad.”

As with one of the Titan forms in Keats’s “Hyperion”—

“once tame and mild  
As grazing ox unworried in the meads;  
Now tiger-passioned, lion-thoughted, wreath.”

Thomson, indeed, expressly personifies “Britain” under a like figure—of soft deportment, aspect calm, unboastful,

“suffering long, and, till provoked,  
As mild and harmless as the sporting child;  
But, on just reason, once his fury roused,  
No lion springs more eager to his prey;  
Blood is a pastime.”

The Very Reverend historian of the last years of Queen Anne records with zest how the Secretary was instructed to let the Dutch government know that “the Queen thought herself ill-treated; and that they would soon hear what effect their measures would have upon a mild and good temper, wrought up to resentment by repeated provocations.” One of the most distinguished statesmen of the following age is thus characterized by one who was nearest to him in blood, and certainly knew him best, “He has never been angry with me yet, that I remember, in his life; but if I were to provoke him, I am sure he would never forgive me: he would be immovable, and I might beg, and pray, and write my heart out, to no purpose.” Leslie reports of Lord Egremont that he would bear a great deal before he would take the trouble to be angry; “but when angry, it was to the purpose,” and was proved in startling, staggering sorts of ways. Leigh Hunt’s description of a certain overbearing despot at Christ Hospital includes a remembrance of “S., afterwards one of the mildest of preachers,” starting up in his place, and pouring forth on his astonished hearer a torrent of invective.

tives and threats, which the other could only answer by looking pale, and uttering, or rather muttering, a few threats in return.

“My blood hath been too cold and temperate,  
Unapt to stir at these indignities,  
And you have found me; for accordingly,  
You tread upon my patience.”

So Shakspeare's *Henry IV.* tells the revolting nobles; bidding them, at the same time, now be sure he will from henceforth belie his natural disposition, and give them ample cause to fear him. Again, in “*Troilus and Cressida*,” “Hector, whose patience is, as a virtue, fixed, to-day was moved: he chid *Andromache*, and struck his armourer,” and made for the field,

“where every flower  
Did, as a prophet, weep what it foresaw  
In Hector's wrath.”

*Troilus* himself, in the same noble play, which finds so few readers and deserves such real study, is pictured by *Ulysses* as one “not soon provoked, nor, being provoked, soon calmed;” a line that recalls the similar description of *Othello*, as one “not easily jealous, but, being wrought, perplexed in the extreme.” *Dryden* condenses into a couplet the sum of the matter, when the sovereign, in “*Absalom and Achitophel*,” is made to exclaim, after the reluctant note of interrogation, “Must I at length the sword of justice draw?”

“How ill my fear they by my mercy scan!  
Beware the fury of a patient man.”

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.



## The Preacher's Dissecting Room.

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"I SPEAK AS TO WISE MEN."

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No. IX.

JOHN KER.

**W**HEN we opened the volume of sermons referred to in our last, we had no knowledge whatever as to the particular body of Christians to which Mr. Ker belonged. This was, doubtless, in one way to our disadvantage ; some would, perhaps, say to our discredit as well ; but, considering the work we had to do, we cannot help regarding it as having been, in another way, to our advantage. Our ignorance helped to prevent us from being either prejudiced against it, or prepossessed in its favour ; and enabled us to take the volume simply as we found it, viz., as a collection of sermons by some one who claimed to be a recognised public preacher of the scriptures, and who "hailed," as the Americans say, from Glasgow, but who gave us himself no further information as to the ecclesiastical "tribe" he belonged to. Whether this was by accident or design on his part, we cannot, of course, tell ; but we were very glad, in either case, to meet him on that ground, and to endeavour to judge of that which was before us, uninfluenced by any other colours than those which belonged to itself. We listened, as it were, to the voice without looking at the man—still less, at the pulpit.

And it is one great characteristic and ornament of all the sermons in this volume, that they invite us to do the same. The author's own position as a minister of the United Presbyterian body is a thing of which he never seems to remind us. We have found nothing in any of the sermons from which we could discover with any certainty the denomination to which he belonged, or the nature of his views on church politics, and so on, unless it be from the negative evidence (which is of some force in its way), that he could not have belonged to certain systems or subdivisions which might be specified, from his persevering silence on such matters. We all know of some preachers of sermons who are Christians, "if you please," but something else first ; and whose very dialect and accent betray this, even if they themselves do not proclaim their sectarianism, like Solomon's "fool," as "he walketh by the way." Thus, in some of these.

sermons there are certain ordinances, in others, there are certain questions of finance, which meet you, either avowed or half disguised, at every corner of the route, and which prevent you thus from forgetting their existence, even for a moment, in the deeper thoughts of God's truth. So, when in some discourses you have nothing but dogmas, and nothing in others but the most dogmatic denunciation of all dogmas; or when you find such expressions as "The Church," or "the Churches" on every page, you feel perpetually that you have to do with a preacher who is a mere "provincial," and you are reminded constantly and very unpleasantly of the peculiar province he belongs to. Not, of course, that we admire the affectation of going to the opposite extreme on such matters, or that we would be understood as denying the necessity and serviceableness of such "provinces," or as saying that we regard them all as being equally near to the metropolis of truth. What we deprecate is the undesirable prominence which is occasionally given to them—the line of eloquence which seems to imply, either that some one province is the only one in existence, or that all the rest of the land is tributary, as it were, to that one.

Mr. Ker's method of preaching runs in a different and wiser line. All these "provinces" seem rather to be regarded by him as for the benefit of the land at large, and all the truths of Holy Scripture to be the common heritage of them all. As we said before, one may look his book through, and it would be difficult, except in the negative way above adverted to (if in that) to tell to what community he belonged. And what is the result? Why, that what he says, being the less sectarian, is the more important, and, also, the less likely to offend. His voice travels farther, and penetrates more deeply, and is more pleasantly, and, therefore, so far, more profitably remembered. He who gives up to "party what was meant for mankind," closes a hundred hearts where he opens one; whereas he who lays open to mankind what has been wrongfully appropriated by "party," opens a hundred hearts where he closes one. Thinking and candid men of all kinds, who are desirous really to ascertain the meaning and contents of the Bible, and who feel it to be above all its expositors, are glad to listen to such a one, and are drawn nearer to the truth and to each other, as well as to him, by the process. It is a thing to be much admired, indeed, if we come to think of it, how little sectarianism there really is in the Bible. The only men who find it there are those who put it in first. There are some, it is true, who find pegs there—they would find them anywhere else—on which to hang up the flags of sectarianism; but the pegs are not responsible for such doings; and the flags themselves which are thus suspended, are so far from being part of the

Bible, that their chief effect is to conceal it. There is a story of a well known Presbyterian minister (*magis notus quam nobilis*) who endeavoured to derive an argument against episcopacy from the first chapter of Genesis, on the score that "nothing was said there about bishops." This style of reasoning is not uncommon, whether in favour of episcopacy or against it; but it is a style of reasoning which does very little injury except to those who employ it, and which only serves to prove how extreme must be the necessities of those who have nothing sounder to advance. We have often admired this with delight. We see Christian writers who are as giants in dealing with the enemies of the faith, but whose "right hands" seem to "lose their cunning" when employed against those who are fellow Christians with them in heart, if not exactly in uniform. The secret is in the nature of the weapon to be employed, the "sword of the Spirit" being intended to be used against enemies, and not allies. Against the former, therefore, it is sharp and powerful, and almost cuts of itself. Against the latter it is blunt and powerless, and cannot be made to effect real injury, however forcibly it may be wielded. It is one source of the power of these sermons, that Mr. Ker has acted on this truth.

Our author has another element of strength which is of a more artistic description. He has a lively and vigorous imagination, combined with much judgment and good taste. His imagination may be seen in the illustrations, which like points and lines of bright colour in a well harmonized dress, give brightness and lightness to the whole. His judgment may be seen in his carefulness to keep his fancy within bounds. The lines of bright are so arranged as to follow and set out the natural outline and shape of his subject, and not, as some dress ornaments do, to obscure it, or merely to attract attention to themselves. This is a point, in our judgment, of considerable importance. Illustration is so attractive and gratifying—it is such a powerful anti-soporific for the hearer, and it is so sure, if at all happy and picturesque, to win a preacher popularity and applause, that every man who wishes to excel, or, what is better, to do his best, will be desirous to adopt it. He is almost bound to do so, in fact, if he can, for the sake of his hearers, and of the truth itself. You cannot set forth the truth so as to be listened to—you cannot set it forth so as to be understood (so far as most minds are concerned)—without the aid of comparisons or similes, either explicit or implied. A mere statement of truth devoid of such helps, however logically powerful and correct in itself, is like a picture without shadow or colour—a mere outline, or sketch, which only an artistically trained eye can fully appreciate or understand. To all others such a mere outline is a per-



plexity and a weariness—a call on them to employ faculties which they have never learned and do not wish (in that connexion) to make use of. The colour and shadow, therefore, must be supplied to such persons if we wish them to understand what they see—not left, as it were, in their hands, to supply for themselves. On the other hand, we must remember that there is a danger of doing more than enough on this point. We must not treat men as we do little children, saying, “this is a gate,” and “that is a house,” and “those are clouds in the sky.” Neither should we indulge in such violent alternations of light and shade as to remind people of a chessboard, or put in colouring to such an extent that form and shape are obscured. The “illustration,” in a word, must be strictly subordinate—must be not the end, but the means.

We have read some celebrated sermons, and heard some very popular preachers, and have observed, in regard to both cases, that this last expressed caution seemed entirely forgotten, the whole discourse consisting of little more than a string of gorgeous word-pictures, or more or less striking stories, with the frailest connection between them. If you were to ask yourself the question afterwards, what you had learned, or what the preacher had proved or explained, or what you ought to do in consequence, you would be perplexed to reply. This is one kind of extreme, as the mere bare, unadorned, uncoloured outline or sketch (every point in which, however, may be perspectively accurate and irreproachable) is the other. The present writer, in our judgment, has about hit the right means. There is not only sound reasoning, temperate expression, and deep thought, but great power also, and resource of comparison in almost every page; but this evident wealth of illustrative power is never merely exhibited or displayed. Only now and then, where really required, because some additional thought or aspect of truth has thereby to be presented or enforced, is a comparison given at much length; a line or two, a phrase, a mere word, at other times contains all. Like a rich man of the best description, his wealth is discovered by his ready liberality, not displayed by his extravagance.

We would counsel our readers to go through some of these sermons with an eye to this point. They would thus obtain the best idea of the wealth and liberality we speak of, and of the judicious manner of its use. Any and every sermon will be more or less available for this end; but perhaps a specially illustrative one, called “*The Dew and the Rain*,” founded on Hosea vi. 3,\* will show best how conscientiously (and wisely)

\* “His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain.”

the writer treats and handles his illustrations as simply means to an end. The whole discourse is a twofold string of illustrations; but they are all drawn faithfully and exclusively from the text, and the pictorial or illustrative part is in every case shorter and more succinct than the explicatory portion which follows. Also, another great point—they are all easy in their nature as well as unstrained in their treatment. Extracts would not do justice to them under the aspect in which we now recommend them for study, but we cannot resist closing with the introductory portion of the sermon in question, partly as containing a good illustration of the manner in which Mr. Ker is sometimes content only to touch a great point by the way, and partly also as exhibiting the simplicity and consequent force of his style.

“These ancient Jews must have been very much like ourselves, neither better nor worse, and as we read about them we can read our own hearts. The preceding chapter contains an account of their sins and backslidings, and of their vain attempts, under the miserable consequences, to find help in man. At last, it concludes with a declaration on the part of God that He will return to his place, till they seek Him, and with a promise that this shall not be in vain, ‘In their affliction they shall seek me early.’

“The present chapter begins with a fulfilment of this promise. The children of Israel take with them words and say, ‘Come, and let us return unto the Lord.’ It is not in the power of any creature to assuage the wounds of the heart when they have been felt in all their depth. It is only in Him who made the heart, then, to heal it; and He can and will. The God who has established great laws around us for the preservation of his world, for giving man life and light and sustenance, has made his arrangements also for the cure of our hearts’ maladies, and the salvation of our souls. He has gathered all these arrangements closely around his own person. Our body’s life may lie in knowing his laws, but our soul’s life consists in knowing *Himself*: ‘Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning, and He shall come unto us as the rain.’

“These words were no doubt fulfilled in many a deliverance of the Jewish people; but their own most ancient commentators find their last fulfilment in the great promised Messiah, to whom all the prophets gave witness. The promises of the Old Testament are waves which urge each other on, to rise and fall in many a deliverance, until at length they break on the great shore of all safety—the salvation which is in Christ, with eternal glory. And it would surely be a shame for us Christians to do less than Jewish doctors did, to fail in finding here a prophecy of the world’s Redeemer. It is Christ, then, whom our faith must grasp under these two figures, the *Daydawn* and the *Rain*.”

The reader will see, we hope, the features we have spoken of in the above; and he will also see, we think—which is another point for admiration and imitation—how distinctly the One Foundation is kept in a fundamental position.

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## Biblical Criticism.

*Subject: ST. PAUL'S INFIRMITY IN THE FLESH.*

(Continued from p. 107.)

3. "No," thought the monks and ascetics of a somewhat later date, "not persecution. It was surely something which we can realise, something which we have experienced in ourselves. Must he not have felt those same carnal longings, by which we have been dogged in our solitude, and which rise up hydra-like with seven-fold force as we smite them down. From these Paul thrice entreated the Lord to be delivered, as we have entreated Him; and was only answered, as we have been answered, by the indirect assurance, *My Grace is sufficient for thee.*" This interpretation does not appear in a very tangible form before the sixth century, but earlier writers had used language which prepared the way for it.\* Throughout the middle ages it seems to have been very generally received; and Roman Catholic writers have for the most part adopted it. So it is taken by Aquinas, Bellarmine (*de Monach.* c. 30), Corn. a Lapide,† and Estius. Luther is probably correct when he attributes the prevalence of this interpretation to the influence of the Latin version, which renders *σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκὶ* by "stimulus carnis."

This account again of St. Paul's thorn in the flesh may confidently be set aside. In such a temptation he could not have

\* Jerome *Epist.* xxii. (ad Eustoch.) § 5, says: "Si apostolus vas electionis et separatus in evangelium Christi ob carnis aculeos et incentiva vitiorum reprimit corpus suum," etc., quoting Rom. vii. 24, but he makes no reference to either of the passages in St. Paul which relate to his "thorn in the flesh," and in § 31 of the same letter he says, "Si aliquis te affligerit dolor, legito, *datus est mihi stimulus carnis meæ*," evidently explaining it of some *bodily pain*. The passage in Augustine, Ps. lviii. Serm. ii. (Tom. iv. pp. 572, 3), is vague, and need not necessarily refer to this kind of temptation. Pelagius gives, as one interpretation, "naturalem infirmitatem;" Primasius more definitely, though still only as an alternative explanation, "alii dicunt titillatione carnis stimulatam." Gregory the Great, *Mor.* viii. c. 29, writes, "Sic Paulus ad tertium coelum raptus ducitur, paradisi penetrans secreta considerat, et tamen ad semetipsum rediens contra carnis bellum laborat, legem aliam in membris sustinet." Cf. also x. 10. And thus, as time went on, this opinion gained strength, till at length it assumed the coarsest and most revolting form.

† Corn. a Lapide on 2 Cor. xii. 7 almost exalts this interpretation into an article of faith: "Videtur communis fidelium sensus, qui hinc libidinis tentationem stimulum carnis vocant: vox autem populi est vox Dei."

"glorified;" nor would this struggle, hidden as it must have been in his own heart, have exposed him to the contempt of others. But indeed from painful trials of this kind we have his own assurance that he was free: "I would," he says, "that all men were even as myself" (1 Cor. vii. 7). "Ah no," said Luther, "he was too hard pressed by the devil to think of such things."

4. And in turn Luther propounded his own view of the thorn in the flesh. He complained that the older churchmen were unable from their position to appreciate St. Paul's meaning, and thus he consciously threw into the interpretation of the passage his own personal experiences. It was certainly not carnal longing, he thought, it was not any bodily malady. It might mean external persecution, as others had maintained, but he inclined more and more to the view that *spiritual trials* were intended, faint-heartedness in his ministerial duties, temptations to despair or to doubt, blasphemous suggestions of the devil.\* This view naturally commended itself to the leaders of a new form of religious belief, owing to the difficulties of their position; and spiritual temptation was the account of St. Paul's trial in which the reformers generally acquiesced. From them it found its way into Protestant writers of a later date, subject, however, to some modifications which adapted it to the more equable temper and the more settled opinions of their own day.

\* In his shorter and earlier commentary on the Galatians (1,519) Luther explains it of "persecutions;" in his later and fuller work (1,535) he combines spiritual temptations with persecution; and lastly in the Table-talk he drops persecution and speaks of spiritual trials only, xxiv. § 7 (Vol. xxii. p. 1092 of the Halle edition). This last passage forms a striking contrast to the language of a Lapidé quoted in the last note. "Those were high spiritual temptations," says Luther, "which no Papist has understood," with more in the same strain. Thus each of these writers makes his own interpretation in a manner a test of orthodoxy. Other references in Luther's works to the "thorn in the flesh," are Vol. viii. p. 959, xi. p. 1,437, xii. p. 561.

J. B. LIGHTFOOT, D.D.



## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### MOTHER CHURCH.

"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." — Psa. lxxxvii. 3.

By universal consent Zion is regarded as type of the Christian Church—which is a society of Christlike men, large or small, here or yonder. This society is represented under various figures, borrowed sometimes from natural objects, and sometimes from human relations; such as a spouse; mother. "Jerusalem from above, is the mother of us all." The passage suggests (we do not say it was intended to *teach*) three things concerning the Church as a mother.

I. This mother is GLORIOUS IN HER REPUTATION. "Glorious things are spoken of thee." She has the reputation—

First: *For the highest intelligence.* To her are committed the oracles of God. She is the receptacle and the revealer of heavenly intelligence. What a blessing to have an intelligent mother. An ignorant mother, what a curse! The Church, as a mother, has a reputation—

Secondly: *For self-sacrificing love.* The love which she possesses is of the same kind as that which the Son of God exemplifies—an unconquerable love for souls.

Thirdly: *For the most beneficent achievements.* She has created Christendom. All the arts that bless and adorn the civilised world must be ascribed to her. Her great work is to save souls.

II. This mother IS DIVINE IN HER RESOURCES. "The Highest Himself shall establish her." She has had her enemies. For centuries her life was a simple struggle with fiendish persecutors. Her continuance can only be ascribed to Divine support. (1.) In *what* does God establish the Church? In *truth* and *love*. She is like a tree which He roots and grounds in love; like a vessel which He fastens in the firmest anchorage; like a house which He builds upon a rock. (2.) *How* does God establish the Church? Not by philosophic teaching, not by worldly patronage, not by legislative enactments, but by indoctrinating her with the principles, and impregnating her with the spirit of Jesus Christ, He thus gives her "power, love, and a sound mind." What is the truly established Church? Not the Church established by human law. Such a Church is like a vessel chained to a floating body. It can have no stability. It heaves on the ground-swell of worldly sentiment.



### III. This mother is ILLUSTRIOUS IN HER FAMILY.

First: Her children are *men*. "This and that *man* was born there." The human creature is the subject of many births. There is a time when some are born into the poet; when others are born into the sage; when others are born into the parent, &c. But the children of the Church are those that are born into the *man*. "He that is born of the spirit is spirit," &c. The true Church owns no sons who are not *men*. Many call her mother whom she disowns.

Secondly: Her children have *their birth divinely registered*. "When He writeth up." The Eternal keeps account of every true birth. His register is *accurate and imperishable*. It is "the Book of Life" in which the poor of all lands and ages are enrolled.

Thirdly: Her children are *distinguished by every variety of mind*. "As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there." There is the impulsive Peter, the heroic Paul, and the scientific Luke, and the lamb-like John; there is the fiery Luther and Whitfield, as well as the calm Melancthon and Wesley. There is the rigorously logical Calvin, as well as the sublimely poetic Milton. She numbers amongst her children every variety of mind. There is no monotony in her domestic circle.

### GOD, AND THE HUMAN RACE.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"—Rom. ix. 21.

THREE things are noticeable in this verse,—

I. THE CONSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY OF THE RACE. "The *same lump*." Human nature is "the same" the world over. Whether all men descended from the same stock or not, all are of *one nature*. "God hath made of one blood all nations." This may be argued from the *physical resemblance, the psychological structure, and moral experiences* of all tribes and races. The practical inferences are—

First: *The cultivation of a common brotherliness*. Man should deal with man with a brother's consideration and love.

Secondly: *The cultivation of a common filialness*. There is the One Father of all, and the same sentiment of filial reverence, love, and loyalty, should permeate and control the race.

II. THE ABSOLUTE POWER OF GOD OVER THE RACE. "Hath not the potter power over the clay?" This is a strong mode of asserting that He has, and who will doubt it? God has the power of creating hells as well as heavens—fiends as well as angels. He could organize a sentient being on the principle that every organ, and every nerve, and every breath, would produce inexpressible

anguish. This *undoubted* power of God to create beings for misery, should impress us with His goodness toward us—

First: *In our organisation.* Animally, we are made for pleasure. All the organs are intended and suited to convey pleasing sensations. Intellectually, we are made for enjoyment. There is an inexpressible delight in the discovery of truth. And the universe lies open before us. Socially, we are made for happiness. We are made to love, and others are made to love us. Religiously, we are made for blessedness. We have hearts capable of loving supreme excellence, and supreme excellence is revealed. Instead of all this, we might have been little hells.

This undoubted power of God to create beings for misery, impresses us with—

Secondly: *His goodness in nature.* He has not only organised us for enjoyment, but *every other* sentient being seems to be organised for the same purpose. Ask science? Has the astronomer, with his telescope, discovered a single body in the fields of immensity concerning which he could say, "it is made for dishonour." Has the entomologist with his microscope discovered a single insect concerning which he could say, "this little creature is made for misery." Truly God is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."

This undoubted power of God to create beings for misery, impresses us with—

Thirdly: *His infinite mercy toward human sinners.* He who could create creatures for misery, could certainly make *sinners* miserable. His justice would sanction Him in this. The judgment of the moral universe would approve of this; yet so repugnant is misery to His benevolent nature, that even for sinners He gave His only begotten Son, &c. "God commendeth His *love* toward us," &c. It is to show God's infinite mercy to the sinner, that Paul employs the text.

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#### GOD AND TROUBLED HUMANITY.

"O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?"—Jer. xiv. 8.

THE troubles of Judah were overwhelming at this period. In the preceding verses they are indicated. The text is a patriotic wail. Their subject is, "*God and troubled humanity.*" We have to notice two things.

I. What God ALWAYS is to troubled humanity.

First: *He is "the Hope."* "The Hope of Israel." Men in trouble want hope. Hope alone can buoy them up amidst the surging sea of sorrow. Of all the true hope God alone is the author. (1.) He is the *Inspirer*

of all true hope. He implanted the instinct in the human soul. He calls it forth in trial, makes the spark blaze in the dark night. (2.) He is the *Sustainer* of all true hope. Often times the lamp would go out, did He not feed the waning flame, and shelter it from the gust. (3.) He is the *Realiser* of all true hope. If ever the anticipated deliverance comes, it comes from Him. The storm-tossed mariner "He bringeth to the desired haven."

Secondly: *He is the "Saviour."* "The Saviour thereof." He has a claim to this title. (1.) *The redemptive system He has given to the world attests this.* The Gospel is an infallible antidote for all the sorrows of humanity. (2.) *The experience of all who have attended to His directions testifies this.* It is no objection to this that all men are not saved. The physician may have an infallible antidote, yet if the patient partake not of it, of what value is it to him? He alone can attest the full value of a nautical chart who has sailed by it. All the shipwrecks of those who have neglected it are no argument against its infallibility. Every man that has adopted God's remedial scheme has been saved. "He is the Saviour of the world."

II. What God SOMETIMES SEEMS to troubled humanity. "A stranger and wayfaring man in the land." A stranger in the land is one more or less

unacquainted with what is local, and *uninterested* in it. There are times when God seems to be a stranger in these respects. He seems as if He did not know what was going on; or, if He knew it, was absolutely indifferent. When does He *appear* as a stranger to the good?

First: *When Christ-like enterprises are frustrated.* When great plans of social philanthropy and evangelical propagandism break down, and disappoint the hopes of piety, the good man is likely to feel that God is a "stranger," that He is either ignorant or indifferent to what is going on.

Secondly: *When the most useful men are cut down in the zenith of their life.* When the statesman with a measure for the liberties of a nation—an author with a book for the mental quickening of a whole people—when a preacher with a power to attract and to interest listening thousands, are struck down as in a moment, the good are likely to look on and cry out to the Great God, "Why art Thou a Stranger in the land?"

Thirdly: *When prosperity attends the wicked, and adversity, the good.* This has ever been felt to be a trial, "Wherefore do the wicked people become rich?" Asaph said, "My foot had well nigh slipped," &c. Who that sees the wicked rising to fortune and to eminence, and the good

sinking to penury and to want, does not often exclaim within himself, "Why art Thou a stranger in the land?"

Fourthly: *When enormous outrages are rampant in society.* Such as the crucifixion of Christ, the tremendous wars now on the banks of the Rhine. At such seasons the good look up to heaven, and cry, "Why art Thou a Stranger in the land?" Why not interpose, break the sword in pieces, shatter the artillery, and strike the tyrant down?

#### GOD'S DISCOVERY OF MAN'S SINS.

"He will discover thy sins."—Lamen. iv. 22.

THESE words were addressed to the Daughter of Zion, the chosen people of God, and they are very significant. They are applicable to all men in all time. Our subject is—*God's discovery of man's sins.*

I. It is a VAST discovery. We have had travellers who have discovered whole islands and continents, astronomers who have discovered worlds and systems, but the discovery of all the sins of a human soul is vaster than all. Think (1.) of the *significance* of each separate sin; each one implies the thought, the wish, the volition of an immortal soul standing up in hostility to its Maker. Each is a seed of poison capable of indefinite multiplication, every act of a moral agent,

whether good or bad, has a germinating and multiplying principle in it. Think (2.) of the *number* of each man's sins. Count the sins of one day, and multiply them by all the days of his life, and he will feel they are as numberless as the stars of heaven. God discovers the whole; He discovers their *origin, relations, bearings, issues.*

II. It is a TERRIBLE discovery. It is like the unmantling of a hell full of fiends and fire. God has so constituted our moral nature that nothing is so hideous and revolting to the eye of conscience as sin. Hence the sinner no sooner commits a wrong than he seeks to "wrap it up;" he hides it by excuses and sophistries. When even one sin starts up in all its enormity to the eyes of conscience, how horror-striking is the vision. But for all the sins to start up in the sunlight of eternal justice, how overwhelming the terror. To have the whole sphere of our existence densely populated with the grim ghosts of old sins, how awful "Thou hast set my sins in the light of Thy countenance."

III. It is an INEVITABLE discovery. First: The discovery is *sometimes made here.* It was made to Cain, Belteshazzar, Judas, Felix. When made here a blessed relief may be obtained by faith in the mediation of Christ. It was so with Peter, with the Phillipian

jailor. Secondly: The discovery is *certain to be made hereafter*. "In the day of judgment the hidden things of darkness will be brought to light." "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard sayings and speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

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#### SKETCHES FROM GENESIS. (XIV.)

##### ABRAHAM'S VICTORY.

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham. And he said, Behold, here I am," &c.—Gen. xxii. 1—24.

WE shall offer the following remarks on this passage:—

##### I. THE TRIAL.

First: *An unexpected trial*. Abraham had waited long and patiently for the fulfilment of God's promise; the time at last arrived when Isaac was born, and now, after having passed the weakness of infancy, and the ailments to which the young are subject, his father looked upon him with loving eyes as the one in whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Without a hint, or a word of warning, the command of God comes like a thunder-clap to his

ears, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Most of our trials meet us in a similar manner; the suddenness with which they come is an ingredient in the temptations; if foreknown, they would not be so formidable, and greater preparation would be made to meet them with fortitude and bravery. A lesson is here taught us never to leave God, who is our strength; we cannot afford to live an hour without Him, because our temptations come when least expected.

Secondly: *A trial between the present and the future*. The command is definite as to the time as well as to the sacrifice "Take now thy son," &c. The sinful heart says, "to-morrow"—God's invitations and commands, "to-day." It was evidently a struggle in Abraham's bosom between present and future prosperity. Whilst Isaac was alive, the realization of the promises was probable; but his death would cast a dark impenetrable veil over the future. Not a few of our trials have a like aspect; the present possessions have such charms, we are loath to part with them, especially if the future consequences be unknown at the time of their withdrawal from us. In thousands of cases the



present obtains the victory, and bears the palm ; they prefer the present enjoyment of sin to a life of self-denial, which is an introduction to future endless felicity : thus they lose “ manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.”

Thirdly : *A trial without any precedent.* Abraham knew what it was to offer sacrifices unto the Lord, but a *human* victim was a strange thing for him. The Canaanite did so, but the God he worshipped showed the greatest regard for human life ; it was sacred. But now a commandment comes from *this* God to offer up Isaac ! Never was such a thing heard of before, consequently this made the struggle harder. A man in affliction is liable to think there is no burden so heavy as that which *he* has to bear ; each thinks himself the greatest sufferer, and this at times presses the soul almost to the brink of despair. Strength is obtained from the assurance that others before us have conquered when in similar circumstances, and we can march to the battle-field, singing, “ If others have defeated the enemy, why should we despair ? ”

Fourthly : *A trial between man and God.* There are satanic influences in this world. Satan tempts men to commit sin, but *this* trial came from God to test Abraham's faith. In this tempest the *man* said, “ Spare thy son ; ” God said,

“ Offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” The *human* nature pleaded for Isaac ; the *divine* nature for obedience to God's command. Every *real* trial is of this character ; the engagement is between “ the law in my members,” and “ the law of my mind,” the former endeavouring to bring the man “ into captivity to the law of sin.”

## II. THE VICTORY.

First : *A victory after a long struggle.* “ And on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.” Though he determined to obey the moment he heard the command, still the contest was carried on between the parental feeling towards Isaac and the childlike feeling towards God during the three days' march ; and perhaps the arrow that wounded his heart the most, was the one that came from Isaac when climbing the mount—“ Behold the fire and the wood ; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering.” He conquered, though the engagement was fierce and long. Trials *seem* long, whether they are so in reality or not ; a week of illness, a day of resistance to the powers of darkness is long ; if victorious, the glory is the greater.

Secondly : *A complete victory over self.* “ Thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest.” The father's heart was in the son,

and when *he* was sacrificed in the mind, his own heart was sacrificed also. The voice of faith was to be obeyed rather than that of self. This is the first lesson of Christianity, "Let him deny himself." It is a lifelong warfare; the noblest victory possible for a man to witness on the earth is to see his own selfishness conquered, slain, crucified. Entire self-surrender to God's will is one of the highest achievements a man can aim at in the present.

Thirdly: *A victory revealing the trust God had placed in him.*

He hesitated not for a moment to obey the divine injunction, thus showing himself worthy of God's confidence. Moral worth cannot be lessened by any process of trial or temptation. Gold becomes clearer and purer in the crucible. Evil cannot stand the test; Judas, Ananias, Sapphira, and others are sad examples of this; Abraham, Job, Daniel, and others bear the test gloriously. *Be men*, such that God may permit the forces of earth and hell to combine against you, without any fear of your ever denying the principles you profess, or breaking your allegiance to His throne; let your religion be strong and manly, one that will bear testing.

Fourthly: *A victory which obtained fresh tokens of the divine love.*

The promise is renewed—

*vide* 16-18 verses. The more numerous our deserts, the weaker we become, our strength is gradually exhausting; on the other hand, every fresh victory brings with it renewed strength. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

Observe—1. That a religion without sacrifice is worthless to us. We must sacrifice if we would live God-like—imitate Christ.

2. The shadow directs our attention to the reality—the Saviour's cross. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

*Uckfield.*

CYMRU.

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#### RELIGION AN INTELLIGENT SERVICE.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."—Rom. xiv. 5.

"RELIGION in all its forms is an intelligent service." This sentence, taken from a recently published sermon, expresses a most important truth. Misapprehending the genius of the Gospel, some have regarded it as utterly incompatible with the exercise of the higher faculties of man. While such a view of religion can only be sustained by a reference to a few isolated passages of scrip-

ture divorced from the context, the broader view expressed in the above quotation is found to be in entire harmony with the whole scope of God's word. The words of Paul, "Let every man be fully *persuaded* in his own *mind*," may be applied, not only to the particular questions of practice to which they first referred, but also to the whole range of Christian doctrine and ethics.

The possession of the Divine favour in individual cases is *not* the result of

First: *Hereditary transmission*. (Ezekiel xviii.)

Secondly: *Fatalism*. Whatever may be the mysteries associated with God's eternal decrees, salvation is always spoken of in scripture as the result of faith in Christ, and destruction as the result of unbelief. (John iii. 18.)

Thirdly: *Formalism*. (Isa. i.; Matt. xxiii, 23.) Faith is a trusting to Christ as the result of an intelligent apprehension of His character and claims. This does not necessarily imply (1) that any one who receives Christ should possess infinite knowledge of Him; nor (2) that all who receive Christ should have apprehensions of truth identical either in form or degree.

Three things, at least, are apprehended by all who receive Christ:—

First: That man is a sinner.

Secondly: That Christ is his Saviour.

Thirdly: That in receiving Christ, the man begins to lead a new life.

Of *these* things "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

F. WAGSTAFF.

## Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCLXXIV.)

### THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LAZINESS.

"The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets."—Prov. xxii. 13.

To Solomon slothfulness was one of the greatest evils in the character of man. How fre-

quently does he depict it with graphic force! How often does he denounce it with fiery energy! "Idleness," says Colton, "is the grand Pacific ocean of life, and in that stagnant abyss, the most salutary things produce no good, the most obnoxious no evil. Vice, indeed, abstractedly considered, may be, and often

is, engendered in idleness; but the moment it becomes sufficiently vice, it must quit its cradle and cease to be idle." Two of the evils connected with indolence are suggested in the text.

I. IT CREATES FALSE EXCUSES. "There is a lion without." The streets are very *unlikely* places for lions to resort to. Their home is the secluded glen in desolate forests and untrodden deserts. If ever they are found in streets it is by rare accident. The excuse, therefore, which the slothful man urges, is purely imaginary. "The lion in the streets" is a fiction of his own lazy brain. The slothful man is ever acting thus—

First: *In the secular sphere.* Is he a farmer, he neglects the cultivation of his fields, because the weather is too cold or too hot, too cloudy, too dry or too wet. Is he a tradesman, he finds imaginary excuses in the condition of the market. Commodities are too high or too low. Is he an artizan, he finds difficulties in the place, the tools, or the materials. The industrious farmer finds no difficulties in the weather; the industrious tradesman no difficulties in the market; the industrious artizan no difficulties in the work marked out for him to do. The difficulties are purely imaginary—the dreams of idleness.

Secondly: *In the spiritual sphere.* When the unregenerate man is urged to the renunciation of his own principles and habits, and the adoption of new spirit and methods, slothfulness urges him to make imaginary excuses. Sometimes he pleads the decrees of God, sometimes the greatness of his sins, some-

times the inconvenience of the season—too soon or too late. The slothful man lives in falsehood. He says there is a lion in the street, when the imperial beast is prowling the boundless forest.

II. IT CREATES UNMANLY EXCUSES. The very excuse he pleads, though imaginary, if true would be a strong reason for immediate action. "A lion in the streets!" Why, if he had a spark of manhood in him, a bit of the stuff that makes heroes, he should rouse every power. The lives of the helpless women and children in the town are in danger when the ravenous beast treads the pavement, and humanity urges action. Laziness and cowardice are vitally associated. There is no heroism in the heart of indolence.

CONCLUSION: To true souls difficulties are a challenge, not a check to action. Difficulties are made to be conquered. It is only as difficulties are conquered that man's faculties are developed and his nature ennobled. "Difficulties," says a modern writer, "are God's errands; and when we are sent upon them we should esteem it a proof of God's confidence—as a compliment from God. The traveller who goes round the world prepares himself to pass through all latitudes, and to meet all changes. So a man must be prepared to take life as it comes; to mount the hill when the hill swells, and to go down the hill when the hill lowers; to walk the plain when it stretches before him, and to ford the river when it rolls over the plain. "I can do all things through Christ, which strengthened me."

(No. CCLXXV.)

THE INFLUENCE OF A DEPRAVED WOMAN.

"The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein."—Prov. xxii. 14.

SOLOMON here speaks from experience. Elsewhere he says, "And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands. Whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her." We have already had occasion to refer more than once to the execrable character here referred to.\* There are two things in the text concerning the influence of a depraved woman.

I. IT IS DANGEROUS. "It is a deep pit." This pit is—

First: *Artfully concealed.* She does not leave its dark mouth yawning before the eye. In the garden of her fascinations it is concealed in a nook, encircled with lovely shrubs and sweetest flowers. The victim sees it not until his foot has slipped and he falls.

Secondly: *It is morally dark.* He who falls into it loses all moral light—the light of God's countenance, the light of pure love, the light of holy hope, the light of approving conscience. He is enwrapt in the gloom of sensuality and vice.

Thirdly: *This deep pit is terribly crowded.* What millions of young men fall into it every age and are ruined. They live in the pit and are lost to their age.

II. IT IS DAMNING. "He that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein." "Her feet," says Solomon in another place, "go

down to death, her steps take hold of him." Those that give themselves up to the influence of depraved women are abhorred of the Lord. "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." Solomon had fallen into this pit. "He had forsaken God, and God had for the time forsaken him." And, oh! the agony of awakened conviction and felt abandonment. To what do the fearful words amount? To this, that in His righteous displeasure there is not a heavier curse which offended God can allow to fall upon the object of His wrath, than leaving him to be a prey to the seductive blandishments of an unprincipled woman—that if God held any one in abhorrence, this would be the severest vengeance He could take. Oh! let the youth hear that and tremble! There are few vices—if, indeed, there be any—more sadly prevalent; and there are few—if, indeed, there be any—more miserably destructive of soul, body, and estate. The abhorrence and the curse of God are in the haunts, whether open or secret, of profligacy and lewdness. Wish you to have proof of your being "abhorred of the Lord?" Court the company of the "strange woman." If not, flee from the temptation, as you would from the opening mouth of hell!"—(Wardlaw.)

CONCLUSION.—"Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his ways, by taking heed thereto according to thy word." Let the Word of God, my young brother, be the "lamp to thy feet." "By the words of my lips," says the Psalmist, "have I kept thee from the paths of the destroyer." Cultivate purity in every faculty of being, in

\* See our remarks on chap. ii. 16—19; v. 3—12.



every act of life. Let the heart be clean and the life stainless. One hour's pollution may stain a whole life. Life is made up of littles. The pasture land of a thousand hills is but separate blades of grass. The bloom that mantles the prairies is but a combination of separate flowers.

(No. CCLXXVI.)

A TERRIBLE EVIL AND A SEVERE CURE.

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."—Prov. xxii. 15.

I. Here we have a TERRIBLE EVIL. Foolishness bound in the heart. By foolishness is meant moral depravity, which in a child is something negative, and in an adult something positive—a tendency and a habit of going wrong.

First: *Its deprivation of goodness in its first stages.* Depravity exists in the heart of a child in a negative form, and this is bad enough. The deprivation of the means of life leads to death, the deprivation of good leads to evil. So it turns out that as sure as the child grows up it develops evil in its most positive forms. Where benevolence is not rooted selfishness grows, and from its roots spring all the branches of evil that curse the universe.

Secondly: *The abnormal condition of parents.* A man's physical constitution, temper, and propensities, are undoubtedly modified by his moral character. The drunkard, the glutton, the debauchee, change to a great extent the constitutional powers and tendencies of his being. Whatever is constitutional he transmits to his offspring. The

tendency to drunkenness, gluttony, sensuality, is obviously transmitted. They are bound up in the heart of the child.

Thirdly: *The corrupt social influence under which the child is trained.* The human infant comes into a world where the social atmosphere is full of the elements and seeds of moral corruption. Thus it is that moral evil extends over the race, runs down from generation to generation, and is found bound up in the heart of the child. Here we have—

II. A SEVERE CURE. "The rod of correction." The rod does not necessarily mean corporeal punishment. This is not the most painful rod, nor is it the most effective for spiritual ends. The words suggest—

First: *The infliction of pain.* Disciplinary pain may consist in *restraint* of liberty, food, pleasure—may consist in the *disapprobation of love*. The frown of a loving father is often a severer lash than any material rod. They consist in *moral conviction*, working in the child a deep sense of the sinfulness of his conduct. The Great Father employs pain in the correction of evil—*afflictive dispensations* and the moral convictions of his spirit.

Secondly: *The infliction of pain from a benevolent disposition.* The infliction of pain, whether corporeal or moral, from caprice or revenge, is not corrective, but the reverse. It deepens and strengthens the evil. The child must be chastened not for our pleasure, but for the child's profit. (Heb. x. 12.) Injudicious chastisement, ill timed, ill tempered, ill adapted to the case, and ill proportioned in measure, will effec-

tively frustrate the ends of spiritual correction. It is said of those who have reached heaven, that "they have come out of great tribulation, and have had their robes washed and made white."

(No. CCLXXVII.)

THE EVILS OF AVARICE.

"He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want."—Prov. xxii. 16.

DRYDEN has graphically described the aim of avarice:—"How covetous men, as the fable goes of Briareus, each of them one hundred hands, they would all of them be employed in grasping and gathering, and hardly one of them in giving or laying out, but all in receiving, and none in restoring; a thing in itself so monstrous, that nothing in nature besides is like it, except it be death and the grave, the only things I know which are always carrying off the spoils of the world, and never making restitution. For otherwise, all the parts of the universe, as they borrow of one another, so they still pay what they borrow, and that by so just and well balanced an equality, that their payments always keep pace with their receipts." The text refers to three evils connected with avarice—

I. OPPRESSION. "He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches." Everywhere do we

see avarice working out its designs, and building up its fortunes by oppressing the poor. The poor are used as beasts of burden. They have to cross the seas, to delve in mines, to toil in fields, to work in manufactories, to slave in shops and counting-houses, in order to enrich the coffers of the avaricious. Avarice cares nothing for the health, the liberty, the pleasure, the intellectual, and social advancement of the poor, so long as it can get from their aching limbs and sweating sinews the object of its greed. Avarice fattens on the miseries of the poor.

II. FLUNKEYISM. "He that giveth to the rich." Avarice whilst tyrannic to the poor, is servile to the rich. The wealth it gets it employs with a miserable sycophancy to win the favour and command the smiles of the wealthy and the great. Tyranny and flunkeyism generally go together. Both are the children of avarice. He that proudly domineers over the poor, would servilely bow his knee to the rich. Flunkeyism is eating out the true manhood of England.

III. RUINOUS. "Shall surely come to want." If not to secular want, a want far worse. The want of an approving conscience, the want of a manly soul, the want of social love, the want of divine approbation. Avarice, like every other evil passion, leads to moral pauperism.

# The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

## WAR MONEY—HOW IT MIGHT BE SPENT.

*Expenses of the Russian War.*—The late Russian war cost England alone, according to careful calculations, the sum of one hundred millions sterling. What might, or, rather, what might not have been done for our noble old Christian island by a proper application of such an enormous amount. We copy here one estimate, showing how the hundred millions might have been expended. We might have provided—

1,000 British Schoolrooms	..	..	at £1,000 each	..	£1,000,000
1,000 National do.	..	..	" 1,000	..	1,000,000
1,000 Infant do.	..	..	" 1,000	..	1,000,000
A National Gallery for the Fine Arts	..	..	"	..	2,000,000
100 Schools of Design	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
20 Reformatory Schools	..	..	" 50,000	..	1,000,000
100 Homes for Governesses	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
100 Playgrounds and Gymnasiums	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
200 Mechanics' Institutes	..	..	" 5,000	..	1,000,000
100 Public Libraries	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
100 Baths and Wash-houses	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
1,000 Temperance Halls	..	..	" 1,000	..	1,000,000
20 Asylums for the Blind	..	..	" 50,000	..	1,000,000
20 Ditto for the Deaf and Dumb	..	..	" 50,000	..	1,000,000
20 Public Parks, 5,000 acres, at £100	..	..	"	..	10,000,000
per acre	..	..	" 500,000	..	10,000,000
Drainage and Sanitary Improvements	..	..	"	..	5,000,000
Medical Attendance of the Poor	..	..	"	..	3,000,000
20 Penitentiaries for Females	..	..	" 50,000	..	1,000,000
100 Refuges for Prisoners	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
1,000 Soup Kitchens	..	..	" 1,000	..	1,000,000
100 Sets of Almshouses	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
10 Public Hospitals	..	..	" 200,000	..	2,000,000
10 Hospitals for Consumption	..	..	" 100,000	..	1,000,000
20 Fever Hospitals	..	..	" 50,000	..	1,000,000
20 Ophthalmic Hospitals	..	..	" 50,000	..	1,000,000
100 Floating Hospitals for Sailors	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
100 Hospitals for Drunkards	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
100 Hospitals for Lying-in	..	..	" 10,000	..	1,000,000
10 Sea-bathing Infirmarys	..	..	" 100,000	..	1,000,000
A Fleet of 2,000 Fishing Boats	..	..	" 500	..	1,000,000
2,000 Sets of Nets	..	..	" 500	..	1,000,000
2,000 Life Boats	..	..	" 500	..	1,000,000
20 Orphan Asylums	..	..	" 50,000	..	1,000,000

£50,000,000

All this would have cost just half the sum. Let us, therefore, proceed. We might further have provided—

2,000 Churches and Chapels, at an average cost of £5,000 each	£10,000,000
2,000 Ministers' Incomes of £500 a-year for 10 years	.. 10,000,000
4,000 Schoolmasters' Salaries of £250 a-year for 10 years	.. 10,000,000
City and Home Missionary Objects	.. .. 5,000,000
Foreign Missions, including Continental and Colonial	.. 5,000,000
Bible Society	.. .. 1,000,000
Religious Tract Society	.. .. 1,000,000
Ragged School Union	.. .. 1,000,000

Leaving still seven millions sterling available for other objects of usefulness or benevolence. The items, of course, may be varied according to the taste and sympathy of the reader.

*Expenses of the French War.*—If we look at the expenditure, we find that the war with France cost more than a thousand millions of money; and that out of about fifty millions of annual taxation, only six millions are required for the civil government of the country, including the maintenance of the dignity of the Crown, the whole of the rest being consumed by our war establishments, and the interest of the war debt. Contrasting what war has cost during the fifty years ending in 1850, with the money expended in missionary operations, we find that the incomes during that period, of the Bible Society, the Society of Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the London, the Baptist, the Wesleyan, the Church of England, the Moravian, the Home, the Colonial, the Irish Evangelical, and the City of London Missionary Societies, amounted altogether to 14½ millions, for saving the lives and souls of men; while during the same period no less than 1,200 millions were spent in destroying life and property by fire and sword in war.



#### GRASPING THE PITH OF SUBJECTS.

(Continued from p. 125.)

ONE pernicious effect of amplification is, that it allows no opportunity for the mind to pursue a separate train or process of its own. It is also excessively irksome to persons of enlarged and rapid apprehension, to whom those authors are the most instructive as well as agreeable, who suggest only leading ideas, omitting subordinate remarks and illustrations. Barrow had other merits besides that copiousness or exuberance, which even in him sometimes borders on prolixity, and which elicited

from Charles the Second the compliment, or complaint, that he was an unfair preacher, leaving nothing for others to do after him : but however this may be, it has been well said, I think by Fontenelle, that to exhaust a subject is to be very tedious. The best excuse for spreading out thought over a broad surface—though hardly to such tenuity as is sometimes met with, like gold-leaf beat out by the skill of the craftsman—seems to be, that to the majority, intellectual as natural food is most nutritious when presented in a somewhat bulky form ; few minds, as few stomachs, being able to digest what is highly concentrated.

A proposition expressed in the form of an aphorism communicates more pleasure, or more dislike, than when delivered in a different shape. If approved, its compression, and consequent separation from extraneous ideas, increase its force, and enhance the delight which it imparts. But if disapproved, its condensation only renders it the more repulsive. Had the same sentiment been conveyed in a less concentrated manner, it would haply have been mingled with other reflections, or with gleams of fancy, some of which might have served to divide attention, if not to gratify. Or the very attempt to exhibit it in a favourable light, or to connect it with augmentation, would have diminished the offence, by the deference and compliment thus indirectly conceded to its opponents.

It is not uncommon for the understanding to grasp a great general truth without a minute perception of its elements, or of the various principles which it involves. Certain truths, especially to intellects of a certain class, are like the New World when first discovered by Columbus, of which he could little dream the vastness or undeveloped capabilities. It is but of a piece with this circumscription of view, and strangely illustrative of the dire torpor of an unawakened spirit, that it will admit the most wonderful propositions without the least consciousness or suspicion of their wonderfulness.

Compression of style is the effect of compression of thought. But a wide disparity usually exists between the space which a subject occupies in the understanding, and that which it fills when embodied in words—resembling in the former case the Genie of the Arabian tale while shut up in the copper vessel ; in the latter, the monster when he had emerged in the shape of an enormous mist.

Might there not be a kind of intellectual dialect, or algebra of speech, to be confined of course to intellectual men, which should include little more than the leading conceptions, in words suggestive rather than continuous ? In this case, would not the subject be more vigorously grasped than when spread out into a



wider space? and might not such a compression of sentiment and diction be especially serviceable in argumentative essays, by keeping the attention fixed on the demonstration, without being diverted by the phraseology? The chain of reasoning in Edwards on the Will, for example—though one of the closest and most compact logical pieces ever produced, and from which a philosophic reader would hesitate in wishing a single sentence substracted—might thus perhaps be presented, advantageously for the purposes of comprehension, whether before or after perusal, within limits answering mentally to the story of the Iliad in a nutshell. Some such process, in fact, is performed internally by every discursive and powerful intellect, which resolves, concentrates, and reduces to manageable dimensions, the materials submitted to its examination, operating in matters of thought somewhat as an inverted telescope in perspective, by which the largest object, or a landscape itself, is embraced within the compass of a point.

WILLIAM BENTON CLULOW.

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## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE SOULS INQUIRIES ANSWERED IN THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE. A Year Book of Scripture Texts. Arranged by G. WASHINGTON MOON. London: Hatchards, 187, Piccadilly.

THE author's note to the reader will explain this book:—"The blank diary is intended for a treasury of the autographs of your friends, under their respective birthdays. But not for that only. In one copy of this little book kept for your own private reading, the diary will, I trust, be used for brief but grateful records of God's merciful dealings with you and yours. Well may the mere mention of His mercies call forth the exclamation, 'How great is the sum of them! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.' That you may not forget them, that their memory may not be as the glorious beauty of a fading flower, or as the morning cloud and the early dew which passeth away, I offer you this little book, wherein to write them for a memorial, praying that it may

enable you the better to remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you, and that his mercies may be to you new every morning." This is an admirable little book—an exquisite present for a keepsake.

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SABBATH EVENING LECTURES. By GEORGE CRON. Glasgow: Thomas D. Morrison.

THE subjects of these lectures are :—The Devil's Creed, The Working and Counsel of God, The Potter and the Clay, God's Connection with the Sale of Joseph, The Philosophy of Temptation, Daniel and the Lions, God and the Heathen, The Valley of Dry Bones, A Triad of Duties—Repentance, Faith, and Prayer, Three Grand Universalities. These are subjects touching the vital parts of our faith, and many of them divinely revealed in interesting biographies and poetic metaphors. They are here discussed with great ability, spiritual earnestness, and noble catholicity. Though some of the lectures are very controversial, there is not a particle of acrimony in any—a generous love overflows the arguments. It is a book admirably suited for the young men of the age, and as such we heartily commend it. It abounds with noble thought, much close reasoning, and manly eloquence.

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LIFE PROBLEMS ANSWERED IN CHRIST. Six Sermons by LEIGH MANN. Preface by ALEXANDER MACLAREN, B.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

THIS volume contains six sermons, the subjects of which are :—"Christ and Suffering; Christ and Death; Christ and Faith; Christ and the Law; Christ the Cup of Blessing; Christ and Destiny." They are no commonplace productions. The Author not only thinks for himself, but thinks vigorously and devoutly. Hence there is much that is fresh and quickening in every page, and many passages of spiritual grandeur and exalting strain.

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WORDS IN SEASON. By HENRY B. BROWNING, M.A. London: F. Pitman, 20, Paternoster Row.

WE cannot say that we endorse all the views propounded in this work; yet we can speak highly of its spirit, aim, and ability. It contains somewhere about forty short discourses on scripture-texts, each one concluding with a short prayer. It deserves a large circulation, for it is admirably adapted for usefulness on an extensive scale. We shall be glad to hear that it has passed through many editions.

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ROMANCE OF MODERN MISSIONS. By MISS BRIGHTWELL. London: Religious Tract Society.

THE sketches of mission life contained in this book appeared for the most part in the pages of the "Sunday at Home." This little book contains incidents that cannot fail to be interesting to the young.



## A HOMILY

ON

### *The Sleep of Jonah, and the Sleep of Christ.*

“But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.” (Jonah i. 4, 5). “And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves; but He (Christ) was asleep.” (Matt. viii. 24.)

**O**UR Lord Jesus Christ has taught us to associate His name with that of Jonah. In the history of the weak and faithless prophet He has shown us a type and illustration of His own career and work. Had not Christ Himself instituted such a comparison, it is very unlikely that we should have thought of doing so. We should have looked for types of Christ and of His work exclusively in the grandest names and most heroic deeds of ancient story. But Christ has taught us how to find high teachings in that which is outwardly mean and insignificant. This case of Jonah is one of many in which our Lord has shown us the mysteries of His kingdom, and of His work enfolded in unpromising coverings.

Christ having thus set His own history and the history

of Jonah side by side, we may be permitted to observe an incidental resemblance between them, which appears to be fruitful of suggestion. There is an outward similarity between the two cases, described in the passages cited from the prophet and the evangelist, which suggests comparison and reflection. Here are two journeys by sea. Both ships are overtaken by a storm, and we see them staggering beneath the raging wind, and imperilled by the boisterous waves. In each ship there is an anxious, frightened crew. In each ship there is a solitary sleeper—sleeping on, through all the shrieking of the wind and the thunder of the tempest, until aroused at length by the urgent call of His excited and alarmed fellow-voyagers. There is a study for us here, in this sleep of Jonah and this sleep of Christ.

1. This common sleep reminds us, first of all, of the familiar but significant fact, that the physical conditions of human life are the same in all cases—in the case of the good and of the bad. There is one law which makes sleep a necessity for all.

In both these cases the immediate cause of sleep was, without doubt, bodily weariness and exhaustion. Jonah was wearied, and so was Christ. The prophet, who had fled in hot and ignoble haste from God's summons to a painful and disagreeable duty, and had thought, by change of scene and circumstance, to get rid of the imperious demands of the office he sustained—and the Son of Man and Son of God, who counted it His joy to spend His strength in the service of the Father, and in the teaching and relief of humanity—both came to the limit of their bodily strength, and both sank wearily to rest. One had toiled in glad fulfilment of a ministry of love and sorrow; the other had angrily refused to obey the voice of the Lord. But both slept.

And thus we see illustrated the check which the uni-

versal and mysterious law of sleep puts upon every form of human activity. The good man—nay, the highest and best of all—is not exempted from the common law. His bodily energy is soon exhausted, and demands a suspension of all labour, even the holiest and most delightful, until the waste and wear of life are made good again. And this limitation of bodily energy puts its restraint on human wickedness. It enforces a perpetually recurring pause in the activities of the sinful, the thoughtless, the worldly. It stops, with regular interruption, the feverish haste with which men rush through their span of life. We are glad of that, for in this calm which God sends ever and anon upon the reckless, tumultuous ocean of man's vice and misery, we think we can see a prophecy of hope for the world.

But, alas! we sometimes cry, that the activities of the noble and the good should thus be stopped. Alas! that these must lay aside so often and so soon their toils, their consecrated tasks, their questionings, their search for Truth. And in discouragement and distress, the Christian man at times longs for some exemption from the general law. They are, at best, but broken fragments—brief snatches of service—which we can render to God in this life. And these enforced pauses, these constant demands of the body for repose, this weakness and weariness, this poor, limping service, all remind us perpetually of the imperfection of our present state. But we may take heart again when we see Christ asleep. He sleeps, and His works stand still. And “He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.” He bids us also exult in the anticipation and assurance of the children of God, that one day this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. “The earthly house of this tabernacle” shall be changed, and “our house which is from heaven” shall be filled with the activity of



unbroken service, and we shall not weary of the unshaded light of God.

2. This sleep of Jonah and this sleep of Christ remind us that there are instances of peril in which physical causes conduce to the absence of alarm, both in the case of good men and bad.

Now that Jonah was "fast asleep," he was as untroubled by the threatening fury of the storm as Christ Himself. Sleep shut out the consciousness of danger, and the sense of alarm. There is something terrible in this power of physical causes to produce in men unconsciousness of, or indifference to, perils which if actually perceived and considered might well excite the keenest apprehension and concern. Sleep does it, and so do other conditions of the body.

Sometimes—how often!—the vigour and robustness of a man's bodily constitution contribute largely to indifference to dangers, which, if he regarded them, might fill him with dismay. You meet him buoyant, cheerful, quite at ease, as untroubled apparently by any apprehension or alarm as a Christian man; and yet you know, and he knows, that he is living a prayerless, an unconsecrated, a godless life. But the fulness and energy of his bodily vigour enable him to throw himself into the occupations or amusements of the passing day, and to dismiss the thought of wasted talents, of selfish indulgence, of misused gifts, of a neglected Saviour, of a forgotten God. He is a strong man; he can eat, and drink, and sleep, and leave terrors, tears, and prayers to the sickly and hypochondrical. Here, then, is a physical cause largely helping to make a man altogether indifferent to the awful peril of irreligion. The Christian is enabled to maintain his cheerfulness and serenity; but so is the man of sound health and superabundant energy. Christ is able to sleep in the storm; but so also is Jonah!

Let us take an instance of another kind illustrative of the same fact. You enter a chamber in which the last storm is beating round a dying man. The frail vessel of humanity is breaking up; the spirit is drifting away upon the dark waters which break upon an unknown shore. Friends are looking on, momentarily expecting the final catastrophe, and watching for it with breathless and tearful interest. But he who is most nearly concerned—he, the glory and strength of whose life are almost gone—he who, sinking into dark waters, is leaving the golden light of earth behind him for ever—he who cannot repair the past, the issues of which he is now about to face—he who has come to that solemn “arch, wherethrough gleams that untravelled world,” in which every human life shall be seen in the all-revealing light of God—HE is unmoved. There is no terror in that calm and passionless face. There is no fear nor regret in that fixed, impenetrable gaze. No voice of sorrow comes from those motionless lips. And so the spirit passes silently away to God who gave it, and a smile is left upon the face, and those who remain take comfort from the peaceful and quiet death. “He died so easily,” they say. God forbid that we should wrench from bleeding hearts such healing as such considerations may legitimately afford. But from such signs as these can we say, The man was a Christian; there was no cause for fear or dismay? Alas, no! We cannot say this. For we know too well that in the case of the man who loves God, and of the man who is wedded to the world, death very often assumes the same external aspect. Often, very often, when the time to die approaches, the avenues to the soul seem to close up; the powers of expression fail; the whole man sinks into a lethargy and unconsciousness, in which he finally passes away. It is so with the good and with the bad, the prepared and the unprepared. The last storm sweeps down, the tempest is rending the shrouds,

the decisive moment is at hand, and yet the recreant, faithless *lost* one sleeps—sleeps as calmly and peacefully as does he for whom the angels wait. The vessel is ready to sink, but the faithless prophet, as well as the devoted Saviour, is asleep.

3. This sleep of Jonah and sleep of Christ are indicative of two widely different spiritual conditions and processes issuing in strikingly similar results.

We do not wonder that Christ should calmly resign Himself to sleep, without apprehension or consciousness of peril. He knew that He was in the Father's hands. He only sought the accomplishment of the Divine plan in His life; and there was no peril for Him. But how could Jonah sleep, whatever his weariness, in the very act of such unfaithfulness to God? How immeasurable was the moral distance between the two, we need not attempt to say. But what we ought to remember is, that in both instances the spiritual condition *may* have contributed to the soundness of the sleep, and the consequent unconsciousness of danger.

With what thought Jonah went to sleep we are not told. There appears to be some evidence, however, that he was troubled by no great sense of insecurity. We cannot say how far Jonah proceeded in the work of silencing the accusations and disturbances of conscience, how far he had become reconciled to the course which he had adopted. But how rapid such processes sometimes are! how swiftly such delusions sometimes take possession of the soul! And we know that in proportion to the success which Jonah had had in quieting conscience would be the ease with which he would drop off to sleep, and the probable soundness of his slumber. There was no uneasiness at the heart of Christ, and so He slept. There was not uneasiness enough at the heart of Jonah to keep him awake, and so *he* slept also.

That we may be kept free from apprehension and alarm it is necessary that the conscience should be quiet. But there are two ways of making it quiet—and the awful fact is, that one way sometimes seems—for a little while at least—to answer almost as well as the other. There is a sleep, a quiet, of the conscience, as of the body, which is natural, healthy, invigorating; there is a sleep of the conscience as of the body, which is the result of disease, and which is the precursor of death. We must get conscience to sleep somehow. And we may do it by having it purged from dead works to serve the living God; or we may do it by a potion that will steep it in insensibility and forgetfulness. The mind may become reconciled to the thought of disobedience, of evasion of duty, of sin. We may get accustomed to living without God in the world. And so, for a spiritual reason, in addition to the physical one already noticed, the Christian man and his irreligious neighbour may *seem* to be pretty much alike. One may seem to be as little disturbed as the other by any apprehension of a judgment and a life to come. And probably such is, to a large extent, the case. As a matter of fact, I suppose irreligious men are not in this life consciously the unhappy, miserable beings they are sometimes represented. Certainly some irreligious men are not. Indeed, to those who are most unhappy there are periods of relief. Misery comes to men in gusts; it is not the permanent condition of life's atmosphere to any one. No! If a man refuse to be a Christian it by no means follows that he will live in a state of perpetual excitement and alarm. He may sleep, and from his sleep even imminent perils will not always rouse him. As Christ slept in the storm, so did Jonah—and so may we.

Oh, we almost wonder how it is that God lets men thus sleep on. With all the resources at His command, we ask, Why does He not torture sinful men so that they cannot

sleep? Why are they not made conscious of the dark shadow that rests upon their lives? Why are they so gay, so blithe, so unconscious of the opening chasm at their feet? Why? Because it is not God's plan to compel men to His service. Because He has given us capabilities of service too grand for slavery. He would not have us in bondage even to Himself. Why? Because men have schooled themselves into an indifference and insensibility into which He never intended them to fall. And so He speaks in clear and gentle tones—He speaks, sometimes, in an urgent, loud, authoritative voice—but He never so speaks that we may not refuse to answer. He never so compels us to attend, that we may not settle ourselves to sleep again.

But the time of awaking comes. “What meanest thou, then, O sleeper? Arise, and call upon thy God! if so be that thou perish not!” What meanest thou by such calm and cheerful indifference, whilst such mighty issues are at stake? Surely any excitement and alarm were better than such deathly slumber!

In most Christian congregations it may be that there are some—one or two perhaps—who are suffering from the pangs of an awakened conscience. They have thrown off their indifference, and they cannot rest, they cannot sleep, for the shame, self-reproach, and sorrow which they feel. For such Christ waits with infinite compassion and concern. To these—to every troubled, doubting, contrite heart—He offers peace and joy. Let not the spirit be rent by wild apprehensions of a future which it cannot read. Come to Christ, and find rest.

But the probability is, that the condition of the majority of those who habitually listen to Christian preaching is like that of the Ten Virgins, of whom Christ speaks in His parable: “While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.” So far as any intense spiritual excite-



ment is concerned, the habitual state of most of those who are familiar with Christianity is one of repose. The wise and the foolish sleep; the wise are not thrilled by an ecstasy of expectation; the foolish are not cowed or tormented by a passion of apprehension or alarm. But we may do well, earnestly, and as in the sight of God, to ask ourselves now and then, How it is that we are free from any alarm or deep anxiety about our spiritual state? We slumber and sleep. Is it because we are finding our rest in reconciliation with God, or because we have dismissed the thought of God, and comforted ourselves with an opiate? When the cry is raised, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him!" shall we be ready?—or shall we share the sad surprise of those who, when they hurried to the door, found it shut, and themselves in the outer darkness, while the inexorable voice from within sounded the knell of their destiny—"I never knew you!" Oh, no! it need not be so. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

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#### NECESSARY RULES FOR SLEEP.

THERE is no fact more clearly established in the physiology of man than this, that the brain expends its energies and itself during the hours of wakefulness, and that these are recuperated during sleep. If the recuperation does not equal the expenditure the brain withers—this is insanity. Thus it is that, in early English history, persons who were condemned to death by being prevented sleeping always died raving maniacs. Thus it is also that those who are starved to death become insane—the brain is not nourished, and they cannot sleep. The practical inferences are three:—First: Those who think most, who do most brain work, require most sleep. Second: That time "saved" from necessary sleep is infallibly destructive to mind, body, and estate. Third: Give yourself, your children, your servants,—give all that are under you the fullest amount of sleep they will take, by compelling them to go to bed at some regular early hour, and to rise in the morning the moment they awake. And within a fortnight, Nature, with almost the regularity of the rising sun, will unloose the bonds of sleep the moment enough repose has been secured for the wants of the system. This is the only safe and sufficient rule; and as to the question how much sleep any one requires, each must be a rule for himself. Great Nature will never fail to write it out to the observer under the regulations just given.—*Dr. Forbes Winslow.*

## Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this TEHLIL, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections :—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character, and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

### *Subject*: PHASES OF A PIOUS SOUL.

“Good and upright is the Lord :  
Therefore will He teach sinners in the way.  
The meek will He guide in judgment :  
And the meek will He teach His way.  
All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth  
Unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.  
For Thy name’s sake, O Lord,  
Pardon mine iniquity ; for it is great.  
What man is he that feareth the Lord ?  
Him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose.  
His soul shall dwell at ease ;  
And his seed shall inherit the earth.  
The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him ;  
And He will show them His covenant.  
Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord ;  
For He shall pluck my feet out of the net.”—Psa. xxv. 8-15.

HISTORY.—(See HOMILIST, page 139.)

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver.* 8.—“*Good and upright is the Lord.*” Here are two attributes ascribed to Jehovah—benevolence and rectitude. The latter, indeed, is but the modification of the former. Benevolence often transcends the claims of rectitude, but never transgresses them. Justice maintains the mutual rights between God’s creatures and themselves as well as between Him and them. The battle of Divine attributes is an absurdity, nay, blasphemy. One principle governs the Almighty in all, that is love. “*Therefore will He teach sinners in the*

way." Because He is good He is prompted to guide the sinner; because He is righteous He will guide him rightly—guide him in harmony with the immutable laws of His empire.

Ver. 9.—“*The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way.*” The word “meek” means humble. God does not vouchsafe His guidance to the proud sinner. The Lord resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Ver. 10.—“*All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.*” God has His methods of action, paths through which He moves on in majesty to the accomplishment of His sublime purposes. These paths, in relation to the humble sinner, are marked by “mercy and truth.” Calvin says: “The sum is, God acts in such a faithful way to His people as that they experience Him in all points to be faithful and true.” The words “covenant” and “testimonies” here are equivalents, meaning God’s precepts or laws.

Ver. 11.—“*For Thy name’s sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.*” God’s name stands for Himself. “On account of Thy name is on account of Thy being.”—Ewald. A man’s name seldom means himself, sometimes it conceals himself, sometimes it misrepresents himself. God’s name means Himself—is Himself. “*Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.*” All sin may be described as iniquity—the want of equity, the want of conformity to the right. The writer felt that his sins were “great.” They were great in their number, heinousness, baneful bearing: yet he seeks pardon, he prays for it. The idea of the Psalmist in this verse is this, “Because Thou art great, I ask Thee to pardon my sins, which are also great.” It requires a great God to pardon sins. A being’s forgiving faculty is in proportion to the greatness of his soul. Little men cannot pardon.

Ver. 12.—“*What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose.*” The idea is, whoever has true reverence for Jehovah, genuine godliness, shall be guided in the right way, in the way which a man ought to choose. It does not matter whether the good man is rich or poor, learned or rude, to him the Divine guidance shall be vouchsafed.

Ver. 13.—“*His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.*” This is a further expression of the privilege of the good. In the margin the expression, “dwell at ease,” is rendered “lodge in goodness.” In the Vulgate the expression is, “shall tarry in good things.” He shall have a permanent abode in goodness.

Ver. 14.—“*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him: and He will show them His covenant.*” “The friendship of Jehovah is to (those) fearing Him, and His covenant to make them known.”—Alexander. The meaning is either that His covenant is designed to be known by His friends, or that His covenant is designed to make them known. “The meaning of the whole verse,” says Alexander, “seems to be, that Jehovah condescends to hold familiar intercourse with those who fear Him, and enters into covenant relation with them, for the purpose of

making them know all that they need know for His service or their own advantage." Godly souls have a clue to Divine mysteries; they have the canon by which to interpret God's revelations in nature, history, and the Bible; they have the golden key by which to unlock the paradise of truth.

*Ver. 15.*—"Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the net." Here the Psalmist expresses his habitual state of mind in relation to Jehovah and his confidence in Him for deliverance. "He shall pluck my feet out of the net." A "net" is often used as a metaphor for danger—Psalms ix. 19; x. 9.

ARGUMENT.—The whole psalm, we have said, is divided into two sections.

(1.) The appeal of a devout soul to God (*ver. 1-8, and the 16-22*); and

(2.) The meditations of a devout soul upon God (*ver 8-15*).

This section is for our present reflections:—

HOMILETICS.—The subject of the passage, as we have said, is the meditations of the devout soul upon God. Jehovah here appears to the mind of the Psalmist as the "Good and Upright One." He is good in His nature; He is Love; He is good to all. He is essentially, immeasurably, immutably, everlastingly good. He is upright in conduct, moves ever according to methods of which all consciences in the universe, whether in heaven or hell, are bound to approve. Damned fiends, and hopelessly fallen souls, are bound by their consciences to exclaim, "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints." "Good and upright is the Lord." Thus He ever appears to the eye of His moral universe.

In this section the Psalmist regards this "Good and Upright" God as guiding the "meek," and those that "keep His covenant," and those that "fear the Lord" *in a certain way*. What is this way? The verses shall answer the question.

I. It is the way of MORAL EXCELLENCE. Three expressions are here employed to represent the moral character of this way. (1.) "*Judgment.*" "The meek will He guide in judgment." This word here stands for rectitude; God leads the penitent sinner into the right in relation to himself, the creature, and the Creator. (2.) "*His way.*" "The meek will He teach His way." God has a particular way with all His creatures according to their natures. He has a particular way with inorganic matter, a particular way for life, sentient

and insentient, a particular way with mind, rational and irrational, a particular way with spirits, fallen and unfallen; He has a particular way for fallen men to pursue, and that way is clearly marked out in the history of Him who is the *Way*, as well as the Truth and the Life. "I am the way," said Christ—God's way for sinful men. (3.) "*Keep His covenant.*" "Such as keep His covenant and His testimonies:" which means such as keep His written laws.

All these expressions mean *holiness*. It means that God guides the penitent sinner into paths of holiness. What does the Lord thy God require of thee? "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

II. It is the way of EXPERIMENTAL BLESSEDNESS. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies."

First: *They experience the mercy of God in their way.* All His "paths," all His conduct towards them are mercy. They experience His mercy in healing their diseases, sustaining their existence, removing their perplexities, overcoming their enemies, &c. What good man does not feel in every step that God is merciful? It is all mercy.

Secondly: *They experience the truth of God in their way.* "Mercy and truth." He is ever faithful to His word. His promises are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. "Ye know in all your hearts," said Joshua to his charge, "and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." "There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."

III. The way of SIN FORGIVENESS. "For Thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." This is a prayer, but the answer to the prayer is only obtained in the way which Jehovah leads the sinner. Observe two things here.

First: *An urgent need for pardon.* "Pardon mine iniquity,



for it is *great*." All men are sinners, but all men are not equally great sinners. There are almost endless degrees in guilt. Whilst sinners who are the least guilty require pardon, those who are the most guilty require it more. David felt himself a great sinner, and he urges the magnitude of his sins as an argument for pardon.

Secondly: *The sovereign reason* for pardon. Why are sins pardoned? Not for anything the sinner can do, nor for anything that any one can do for him, but because of God's nature. "For Thy name's sake." God is great enough to forgive *great* sins. What is the name of the Lord? Here it is: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty," &c. (Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7.)

IV. The way of SOUL WEALTH. The words suggest four thoughts concerning soul wealth.

First: It is *abundant*. "His soul shall dwell at ease." He shall lodge in goodness, as the margin has it. He shall be surrounded by goodness—nothing but goodness; no weeds in his garden, no blight in his atmosphere, no discord in his music, no cloud upon his sky. His existence will be amongst the delectables, and nothing else.

Secondly: It is *permanent*. "His soul shall *dwell* at ease." What it has will be permanent. His inheritance will be incorruptible. Earthly riches take to themselves wings, and flee away; but soul wealth is permanent.

Thirdly: It is *transmissible*. "His seed shall inherit the earth." Originally this promise referred to the land of Canaan as a promise connected with obeying the law of God. (Exod. xx. 23.) But it expresses a spiritual truth. A truly good man can transmit his goodness to his children, and bring them into the spiritual inheritance. Who are the true inheritors of the earth? Not the men who, by parchment, can legally call the largest number of acres their own; but the men who, by filial sympathy with God, revel in its

beauties, appropriate its blessings, and rejoice in its Creator. All things are the property of the good. "All things are yours," &c.

Fourthly: It is *free*. For whom is this wealth? Here is the answer in the twelfth verse—"What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose." It does not matter who he is if he has religion. He makes a lodgment in the realm of goodness; he enters into this inheritance. Here then is the true *otium cum dignitate* of souls—dwelling at ease.

V. The way of DIVINE FRIENDSHIP. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant." The man who walks in the way God would have him walk gets so friendly and so intimate with Him, that he becomes initiated into His secrets, gets acquainted with His counsels. There is no mystery in this. Establish a strong mutual sympathy between any two minds, and the one, without formal communication, shall know the hidden thoughts and counsels of the other. Or bring two minds under the government of the same moral sentiments and dispositions, and the one, without any utterance, shall understand the hidden things of the other. The godly man is brought into vital sympathy with God, brought under the domination of the same moral sentiments, and hence he knows God. Love interprets love. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 4.)

Spiritual sympathy with God gives the soul the eyes of the seer, makes men prophetic, enables them to tell what men will do to-morrow and a thousand ages hence. The greatest prophets have always been the best men. Hearts united in love think with one brain.

VI. The way of ULTIMATE DELIVERANCE. "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net."

First: *Men are entangled in dangers.* Evil has laid nets for

the soul here in every path of life. The devil has laid his traps in all directions.

Secondly: *True men will be delivered.* "For He shall pluck my feet out of the net." Deliverance is sure to come, the net will be broken, the snarer confounded, and the soul, like an uncaged eagle, shall soar into the sunny realms of freedom and joy.

Thirdly: *Hence true men always keep their eyes on the Lord.* "Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God until that He have mercy upon us" (Ps. cxxiii. 1, 2). God fills up the horizon of a good man's soul.



## A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the Island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19-21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

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*Subject: SOUL MILITANCY.*

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For

we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."—Ephes. vi. 10-17.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 10.*—"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." "St. Paul again and again compares himself and the Christians to whom he writes, to soldiers, and their lives to warfare. And it was natural that he should do so. Everywhere he went, in those days, he would find Roman soldiers ruling over men of different races from themselves, and ruling them, on the whole, well. Greeks, Syrians, Jews, Egyptians—all alike in his days obeyed the Roman soldiers, who had conquered the then known world. And St. Paul and his disciples wished to conquer the world likewise. The Roman soldier had conquered it for Cæsar—St. Paul would conquer it for Christ. The Roman soldier had used bodily force—the persuasion of the sword. St. Paul would use spiritual force—the persuasion of preaching. The Roman soldier wrestled against flesh and blood. St. Paul wrestled against more subtle and dangerous enemies—spiritual enemies, he calls them—who enslaved and destroyed the reason, and conscience, and morals of men. St. Paul and his disciples, I say, had set before themselves no less a task than to conquer the world. Therefore, he says, they must copy the Roman soldier, and put on their armour as he put on his. He took Cæsar's armour as he put on Cæsar's uniform. They must take the armour of God, that they may withstand in the evil day of danger and battle, and having done all—done their duty manfully as good soldiers—stand; keep their ranks, and find themselves at the end of the battle not scattered and disorganized, but in firm and compact order, like the Roman soldiers, who, by drill and discipline, had conquered the irregular and confused troops of all other nations."—Charles Kingsley. Probably the very circumstance in which the Apostle was now placed suggested to him the military imagery which he now employs. He was a prisoner at Rome, under the guard of a soldier, to whom he was actually chained, and he must have constantly witnessed the parades and reviews and daily discipline of the emperor's Prætorian guard, the picked soldiers of the Roman army, since we know that the Gospel was preached, apparently by himself, certainly by his companions, in their barracks. His first exhortation is to muster strength for the inevitable conflict. "Be

strong in the Lord" (or, as Alford has it, "Be strengthened in the Lord") "and in the power of his might." This may mean, have Divine courage: an invincible bravery is essential to a true soldier.

*Ver. 11.*—"Put on the whole armour of God." The word rendered "whole armour" here (*πανοπλίαν*, panoply) means complete armour, offensive and defensive. "*That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*" The devil is a personality; a personality against men, a personality that uses stratagems to gain his malignant ends. He is wily, cunning, and fights not visibly, but in ambush; fights not by force, but by craft.

*Ver. 12.*—"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world." "One of the most learned among ancient expositors interprets the formidable enemies thus contrasted with 'flesh and blood,' or feeble men, to be 'the spiritual powers of innate passions which work by means of our natural desires.' Moreover, in all the old English versions of the Bible, the word translated 'high places' is interpreted to mean heavenly things, that is, matters pertaining to God's kingdom; so that the teaching of the whole passage is, that the Christian warrior does not fight, like the earthly soldier, against visible antagonists, but against the sin which reigns in his heart, and the spiritual powers of evil which tyrannize over his will, quench his heavenly aspirations, and would fain hurry him to eternal ruin."—Bishop Cotton. "*Spiritual wickedness in high places.*" Ellicott renders this, "spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly regions." The evil spirits are supposed to occupy the lofty regions of the atmosphere: hence their chief is called "the prince of the power of the air."\*

*Ver. 13.*—"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." "In the evil day." The evil day is the day of temptation, the day of assault, the day when the evil spirits seek to come into the soul like a flood. The whole day of a man's life on earth is more or less an evil day.

*Ver. 14.*—"Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." "The girdle which surrounded the loins of the Roman soldier kept together all the separate pieces of the panoply. It was a kilt much like what the Highlanders wear now."—Kingsley. The girdle of the spiritual soldier is "truth." Truthfulness—reality—are essential to moral soldiery, the very girdle to bind all the other parts of the panoply together, and to protect the vitals of the soul. No man can fight this true fight who is insincere and dishonest; he must be true to the core; there must be no crack in the metal of his being, it must ring out music to every touch. "*Having on the breastplate of righteousness.*" The breastplate defended the most vital organs of the man. Righteousness or justice must be this breastplate in the moral campaign. The man who lacks integrity can offer no successful defence to the foe.

\* See a sermon on this "Homilist," First Series, vol. iv., page 217.



*Ver. 15.*—"And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace."

"The Roman soldier had his preparation, which kept him prepared and ready to march through the world. And of that St. Paul was thinking, and had need to think; for he had heard the sound of it in every street, on every high road from Jerusalem to Ephesus, ever since he was a child—the tramp of the heavy nailed boot, which the Roman soldier always wore. The Roman soldiers were proud of their boots—so proud, that in St. Paul's time they nicknamed one of their royal princes Caligula, because, as a boy in camp, he used to wear boots like the common soldiers; and he bore that name when he became emperor, and bears it to this day. And they had reason to be proud, after their own notion of glory. For that boot had carried them through desert and through cities, over mountain ranges, through trackless forests, from Africa even into Britain here, to be the conquerors of the then known world; and wherever the tramp of that boot had been heard, it had been the sound, not of the good news of peace, but of the evil news of war."—Kingsley. The boot of the true spiritual soldier is to be the "Gospel of peace." With this boot he will stand firm, he will never be tripped up or moved from his place. The sound of its tramp strikes terror into the heart of the foe.

*Ver. 16.*—"Above all [that is, not above all in point of value, but over all as the soldier holds his shield in defence of himself], taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The shield guarded those parts of the soldier which the rest of the armour did not protect; it warded off the arrows, the stones, and the darts. Faith—faith not in creeds, but in Christ—is the true shield in moral soldiership. This is a shield that will ward off all the fiery missiles of our spiritual enemies.

*Ver. 17.*—"And take the helmet of salvation." "The helmet was a cap made of thick leather or brass, fitted to the head, and was usually crowned with a plume, or crest, as an ornament. Its use was to guard the head from a blow of the sword, or war-club, or battle-axe." The helmet was to be the "hope of salvation." That is, of safety. "Not merely," says an author already quoted, "of being saved in the next world—though of course St. Paul includes that—but of being saved in this world: of coming safe through the battle of life; of succeeding; of conquering the heathen round them, and making them Christians, instead of being conquered by them. The hope of safety was to be his helmet, to guard his head—the thinking part. We all know how a blow on the head confuses and paralyses a man, making him (as we say) lose his head. We know, too, how, in spiritual matters, terror and despair deal a deadly blow to a man's mind,—how if a man expects to fail, he cannot think clearly and calmly—how often desperation and folly go hand in hand; for, if a man loses hope, he is but too apt to lose his reason. The Christian's helmet, then,—that which would save his head, and keep his mind calm, prudent, strong, and active,—was the hope of success." "*And the sword of the Spirit which is the Word*

of God." The armour hitherto mentioned is defensive. Here is the offensive weapon, "the sword of the Spirit." God's Word is the weapon by which all victories over error and wrong, over sin and misery, may be achieved. This sword has already won wondrous victories, and its triumphs have only just begun.

HOMILETICS :—The subject of these words is *Soul Militancy*, and they bring under our notice *the soul's foes, the soul's strength, and the soul's weapons*.

I. THE SOUL'S FOES. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," &c.

(*To be continued.*)

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## Germ of Thought.

*Subject : CHRISTIAN VIEWS OF DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY.*

"At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."—Matt. xi. 25.

THIS is an ascription of praise to the Eternal by the human nature of the Son of God, and points out one of the ways by which the purified spirit of man may commune with the Infinite Spirit, namely, the public avowal of His prerogatives with regard to nature and grace. The mental act which the text expresses, and the views of God which led to it are worthy of our adoption and imitation. What are they?

I. THE ASCRIPTION OF PRAISE TO GOD. The Greek word for which "I thank Thee" stands, expresses a *conception* rather than a *feeling*, and implies admiration and approval of what is referred to, namely, the *agency* of God in universal being, and in the administration of the kingdom of grace. To admire and adore God for what He does is *becoming* in man and *pleasing* to God (Psa. l. 23 ; xxxiii. 1). *Conception* is the

guide of *volition*, and *volition* is the immediate source of *experience*; and, when these are all in *unison* with the will of God, the Divine glory and human bliss are identical and real. Because of sin, to us, *that* unison is possible only through the mediation of the Son of God.

II. VIEWS OF GOD WHICH EXCITE ADMIRATION. First: *His sovereign rule*. Jesus looked at the Divine government in two aspects—(1.) *In its origin*: (a.) *From creation*. “Father”—originator. (b.) *From ownership*. “Lord”—proprietor. (2.) *In its extent*. “Of heaven and earth.” The rule of God embraces all things: matter, mind, and morals in all their varieties, relations, activities, and issues. How glorious, proper, and blessed is this! And how certain it makes it that *good* will be to all who fall *in*, and *evil* to all who fall *out* with God in creation, providence, and redemption! Secondly: *His sovereign operations*. “Because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” (1.) *Correlative facts*. “These things.” Whatever else is here referred to, “*these*” includes the distribution of blessing and woe, more especially in connexion with the mediation of Christ, as is intimated in fore and aftergoing verses of the text. (2.) *Affected parties*. These are of two classes. (1.) “The wise and prudent.” Generally applied, “the wise” are those who judge Christianity by a worldly standard—who look at it in the light of natural facts and natural truths, instead of the truths and facts pertaining to itself, intended for itself, and justifying itself, as a Divine system of cure for human ills. “The prudent” are those who treat Christianity on the principles of profit and loss, considered in relation to their immediate personal interests rather than the interests of truth and righteousness, in which the best and highest interests of all are really bound up. These are the time-servers and calculating go-betweens of all systems and of all movements, in all ages and countries—the lukewarm confessors of Christ, whom He will at last “spue out of His mouth.” (2.) “Babes.” This denotes persons who know they are ignorant, and desire to be taught. Very

young children observe that they may learn, and learn that they may act so as acquire and enjoy. These are essential elements in Christian discipleship, and are always accompanied with inward satisfaction and Divine enjoyment. "I have been a seeker of truth all my life, but I never found it till I went to Christ as a little child, knowing nothing, that He might teach and bless me; then I saw the truth of Christianity, gave myself to the Lord, and was filled with joy and peace," said the late Dr. Gordon to me on his dying bed.

(3.) *Realized effects.* The operation is one and the same, but the results are diverse and twain, and are determined by the conduct *preferred* by each of two classes in reference to the Gospel of Christ. The same exercise of Divine prerogatives, the same manifestation of Divine perfections *opens* heaven to the teachable and obedient, and *shuts* it to the self-sufficient and self-confident.

Preston.

W. J. STUART.

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*Subject:* REASONS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THE WICKED ON EARTH.

"Wherefore do the wicked live."—Job xxi. 7.

DO they not live?—

I. AS WITNESSES TO ATTEST.—The wicked, by the mere act of living, are witnesses who every hour of every day emphatically speak to us some of the most important truths concerning man and God. The fact that they are permitted to live here witnesses to—

1st. *The amount of freedom with which man is endowed.* How free is man compared to everything about him. We look round on men and we see them trampling on every law of God, indulging in the most rebellious thoughts, and living the most rebellious life.

2nd. *The wonderful forbearance of God.* Here are men whom God made to bless each other, and all to glorify Him, continually cursing each other, and daily dishonouring Him. Though every day He is grieved at their guilt, He continues

their life. He is breathing into them every breath, giving power to the hand they use in the service of sin, to the tongue with which they lie and blaspheme, to the mind with which they conceive dark, treacherous thoughts. God has only to withhold some of the blessings He so freely grants, and they must wither away. But no; on and on they live, many to enjoy great earthly prosperity, many to reach old age. Here is the explanation. "The Lord is not slow concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

*3rd. The existence of an extraordinary element in the Divine government of this world.* We know that in heaven beings live and are happy because they are holy; we are taught that in hell there is inexpressible misery because there is such awful sin. But here are men living often to a good old age, often possessing all they can wish of earthly comfort, often filled with mirth, and yet rebels against God, without repentance, without faith, without love, and we wonder why this world is thus an exception. As far as we know in other worlds, holiness and joy are twin angels that clasp inseparable hands; wherever the one visits the other follows. And sinfulness and misery are twin demons, bound together in chains that will not break; so that where one is the other must be. Why is it not so here? Earth is under a mediatorial government. This great mystery of Christ's suffering for man, and prolonging His probation, can alone explain the other great mystery, that men of debased spirit and godless life are permitted to live here instead of being banished to hell.

## II. AS INSTRUMENTS TO DISCIPLINE.

*1st. In calling out resistance.* The Bible seems to teach that a man is all the better for temptation, for it says, "*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; when he is tried he shall receive a crown of life.*" The wicked are often as the chisel by which God carves out the good man's character, the fires by which it is purified.

*2nd. By calling out the Christian's benevolence.* Our compas-



sion, our prayers, our self-sacrifice, our work, are all called forth by the existence of the wicked.

III. AS BEACONS TO WARN. By their very existence they warn us.

1st. *As to the progress of sin.* Is sin a disease? We see around us those who are in every stage of the disease.

2nd. *As to the effects of sin.* Hell will be an eternal warning against evil. Its flames will be the perpetual beacon fires to warn the universe against sin.

IV. AS CRIMINALS TO REFORM. And this is, we believe, the grand end of their prolonged life. Through Christ's mediation death is delayed that they may be converted to God. The world is a great reformatory. Here are those who, though they deserve nothing but punishment, are, through mercy, enjoying opportunities of reformation. Every reason is here held forth for reforming. On the one hand are those who have sunk so low in vice, that they live to warn against its terrible effects; on the other hand are those who, by yielding to God's Spirit, and daily following Christ's example, are pointing and helping to better things. Here are held forth the inducements of a hell to avoid, and a heaven to gain, and all depending upon our life now. Every means, too, is here at work to reform the wicked who are thus permitted to live. All that is beautiful in nature, all that is holy in pious friendship, all the events of God's providence, all the lessons of His Bible, all the influence of Christ's life, and all the workings of the Holy Spirit.

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

## The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbosities; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

No. X.—STEPHEN CHARNOCK, B.D.

*Subject* : THE VOLUNTARINESS OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

“And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and has given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour.”—Eph. v. 2.

THE sacrifice and sufferings of Christ for us were free and voluntary. His offering was a free-will offering. It is expressed in the same chapter, Eph. v. 25, “He gave Himself for the Church.” He was not made poor by force, but became so, and laid aside His own riches for our sakes.—2 Cor. viii. 9. He became destitute of the advantages other men enjoy, that from His worldly poverty we might become rich in spiritual graces. He was not emptied of His glory by another, but made Himself of no reputation. He took upon Him the form of a servant; it was not imposed upon Him by constraint. He was not debased by others, till He had humbled Himself to the lowest degree of humility.

In the handling this doctrine, I shall do these four things; namely, lay down—

### I. PROPOSITIONS FOR EXPLAINING IT :

First: *The Father's appointing Him to be a sacrifice doth not impair His own willingness in undertaking.* The Father is said to send Him and deliver Him (John iii. 34; Rom. viii. 32); not that the Son was over-persuaded, or came only out of obedience, without any inclination of His own. The Father is said to deliver Him, because the first motion of redemption is supposed to arise from the will and motion of the Father; yet the love of Christ was the spring of all mediatory actions, and His taking our nature on Him; and therefore He is no

less said to give Himself than the Father is said to give Him to us and for us. If you consider Christ as one God with the Father, there is but one and the same will in both. Will belongs to essence or nature; the essence of God being one, there are not in God divers wills, though the Godhead be in divers persons, because the power of willing is the nature, not a personal propriety. The decree of redemption was joint in Father and Son. What Christ decreed as God, He executed as man; and what He willed from eternity, He began in time to will as man. Yet, for our conception's sake, the Scripture represents things so as if they were distinct wills, which yet we must not imagine, any more than because the Scripture, in condescension to our weakness, represents God with eyes, and ears, and hands, we must conceive God to have a fleshly body like ours.

Secondly: *The necessity of His death impeacheth not the voluntariness of it.* Many things are voluntary which yet are necessary; there are voluntary necessities. (1.) It was voluntary in the foundation. The decree was not necessary, but an act of Divine liberty. No reason can possibly be supposed why the Son of God, and Lord of the Creation, should make Himself lower than the angels for us, by any necessity of His own condition. There was indeed a necessity for us, who could not be redeemed without Him, but no necessity arising from the Divine nature. If a creature ready to be famished be in a place where there is only one person of ability and sufficiency to relieve him, there is a necessity on the part of the poor creature to be relieved, and relieved by that person, since there is no other to help him, but there is no necessity on the part of the sufficient person to relieve him; the help he affords him will be a mere act of charity. (2.) It was necessary after this engagement. (3.) Though His death was violent in regard of man, yet this doth not abate the voluntariness in regard of Himself. Judas betrayed Him, the serjeants apprehended Him, Pilate condemned Him, and the soldiers crucified Him. These were but instruments to execute "the counsel of God" (Acts iv. 28); yet He need not have been apprehended unless He would;

He showed His power to escape, not only the united force of the Jewish nation, but of the whole world, by striking His apprehenders to the ground with the majesty of His looks. He that can rescue Himself from the hands of men, and will not, may be said to die willingly, though He die violently. (4.) When our Saviour seemed unwilling to it in the time of His agony, He was then highly willing. This was when He prayed earnestly that the cup might pass from Him, and begins (John xii. 27), "Father, save me from this hour."

II. WHEREIN THIS VOLUNTARINESS OF CHRIST'S DEATH APPEARS. (1.) He willingly offered Himself in the first counsel about redemption to stand in our stead. (2.) The whole course of His life manifests this willingness. In the time of His life He frequently mentioned the *tragedy to be acted upon Him*. (3.) At the time of His death, He manifested this voluntariness in His whole carriage. When the time drew near He declined it not; He would enter Jerusalem with hosannas, as if when He went to His death, He went to His triumph; and indeed it was so, for by that oblation of Himself upon the cross, "He triumphed over principalities and powers." (Col. ii. 15.) He summoned not one angel to take arms for His rescue, though He could have commanded legions to attend Him; but as He had rebuked Peter before for dissuading Him, He now rebukes him for defending Him; moved thereto by an ardency of zeal to drink the cup.

III. WHY THIS VOLUNTARINESS WAS NECESSARY. (1.) *On the part of the sacrifice itself*. He was above any obligation to that work He so freely undertook for us. When He made Himself of no reputation, it was a work of His charity, not of necessity; and He was bound in no other bonds but those of His own love. (2.) *On the part of justice*. Had not Christ voluntarily undertaken it, justice had been wronged instead of being satisfied. It could upon no account have been just to punish One that had not been guilty upon His own score, or by substitution. The satisfaction of justice in one kind had been an injury to it in another. (3.) *Necessary*

*in regard of acceptance.* Christ's consent was as necessary as God's order. In vain had we hoped for the benefit of a forced redemption.

IV. THE USE OF THIS VOLUNTARINESS. (1.) *The way of redemption by a sacrifice was necessary.* Why should Christ so willingly undertake this task, be a Man of Sorrows, lay Himself down into the grave, if the atonement of our sins could have been procured at an easier rate? (2.) *The death of Christ for us was most just on the part of God.* What Christ did willingly submit to, God might justly charge upon Him as a due debt. *Volenti non fit injuria.* That man that will enter into bond to secure the debt to the creditor, or satisfy for the criminal to the governor, may justly be sued upon default of payment by the one, and arrested for default of appearance by the other; what he promised may justly be demanded of him. (3.) *How wonderful was the love of Christ* to accept so willingly of such hard conditions for us, and die so ignominiously upon the cross we had deserved. (4.) How willingly then should we part with our sins for Christ, and do our duty to Him! Oh, that we could in our measures part as willingly with our lusts as He did with His blood! How willingly should we obey Him, who so willingly obeyed God for us! Christ did not let His enemies snatch away His life, but laid it down; our duties should not be wrung from us, but gently distil from us. The more will in sin—the blacker; the more will in obedience—the sweeter. It is in this we should imitate our great Pattern.

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.



## Variations on Themes from Scripture.

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No. XXIII.

*Subject:* BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM.—St. Luke xxiv. 47.

CHRIST risen, His apostles were by Him commissioned to preach in His name repentance and remission of sins, “beginning at Jerusalem.” Divine charity does, as human charity should, begin at home. Divine charity does not, as spurious human charity is apt to do, end there.

The same risen Lord that bade His apostles begin their apostolate at Jerusalem, bade them go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. There was to be neither speech nor language but their voices should be heard among them. After that the Holy Ghost was come upon the apostles they were to be witnesses to their ascended Master, both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Addison meets the objection raised against revealed religion, in some books then lately written, that it does not inspire the love of one’s country, by premising, that “as the sacred Author of our religion chiefly inculcated to the Jews those parts of their duty wherein they were most defective, so there was no need of insisting upon this, the Jews being remarkable for an attachment to their own country, even to the exclusion of all common humanity to strangers. We see, in the behaviour of this Divine person, the practice of this virtue in conjunction with all others. He deferred working a miracle in the behalf of a Syro-Phœnician woman until He had declared His superior good-will to His own nation; and was prevailed upon to heal the daughter of a Roman centurion, by hearing from the Jews that he was one who loved their nation, and had built them a synagogue.”

Swift appends, so to say, a rider to St. Paul’s proposition, that he who does not provide for his own house is worse than an infidel. “And I think,” adds the dean, “he who provides

only for his own house is just equal with an infidel." Neither apostle nor dean would care to say nay to Macaulay's affirmation, that we are not bound to exert ourselves to serve a mere stranger as we are to serve our own relations; that no man would be justified in subjecting his wife and children to disagreeable privations, in order to save even from utter earthly ruin some foreigner whom he never saw; and that if a man were so absurd and perverse as to starve his own family, in order to relieve people with whom he had no acquaintance, "there can be little doubt that his crazy charity would produce much more misery than happiness."

It is of course not into the mouth of a Scotchman that Scott puts the charge against that "narrow-spirited, but yet ardent patriotism," which he alleges to form as it were the outmost of the concentric bulwarks with which a Caledonian is said to fortify himself against all the attacks of a generous philanthropical principle. "Surmount this mound, you find an inner and still dearer barrier—the love of his province, his village, or, most probably, his clan; storm this second obstacle you have a third—his attachment to his own family—his father, mother, sons, daughters, uncles, aunts, and cousins to the ninth generation." It is within these limits that a Scotchman's social affection is affirmed to expand itself, never reaching those which are outermost, till all means of exhausting itself in the interior circles have been exhausted. "It is within these circles that his heart throbs, each pulsation being fainter and fainter, till, beyond the widest boundary, it is almost unfelt." In another of Scott's books, to Meg Dods' sentiment, that "surely there is nae Christian man but loves his own bowels," Mr. Touchwood replies, "Why, that may be, but I have known many who took so much care of their own bowels, my good dame, as to have none for any one else." The Lord Lilburne, of a later story, when informed of the death of Madame de Merville, from catching the fever of a poor widow, whose desolate sick bed she tended—dying, as she had lived, in serving others and forgetting self—pronounces this to be "a warning against trifling with one's health by that vanity of parading a kind heart, which is

called charity. If charity, *mon cher*, begins at home, it is in the drawing-room, not the garret." The peer who thus speaks is representative of the union of bad heart with good digestion, and is sufficiently candid in his cynicism. Of another branch of the family comes that Lord Skindeep, of a contemporary satirist, who professes to have found a philanthropic orator's picture of a famine in Crim Tartary too much for his feelings. What! urges a sceptical acquaintance, when the famine was in Crim Tartary—so far off? "My dear friend," replies his lordship, "that is the certain proof of an enlarged benevolence—the farther a calamity is off the more I feel it." So with Joseph Surface, who dupes some good people into extolling him as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking; and indeed he is owned to have, apparently, as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom, though he is seldom so extravagant as to indulge himself in the exercise of it; he has a string of charitable sentiments at his fingers' end—or rather, at his tongue's end—for, as Rowley says, "I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that charity begins at home." "And his, I presume," adds Sir Oliver, "is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all." Smollett's Mistress Tabitha is out of all patience with her brother, Matthew Bramble, for bestowing a twenty-pound note on a destitute widow and dying orphan. "Child, child, talk not to me of charity. Who gives twenty pounds in charity? But you are a stripling. You know nothing of the world. Besides, charity begins at home. Twenty pounds would buy me a complete suit of flowered silk, trimmings, and all." *Tunica pallio propior*, says the proverb—my shirt is nearer than my coat: "Near is my shirt, but nearer is my skin." *Proximus sum egomet mihi*, quoth Terence's man in the play. *Prima caritas incipit a seipso* is nearly enough rendered by the familiar, "Charity begins at home." John Bull, in Arbuthnot's History of that worthy, quotes the homeliest of these adages with unction: "My shirt," quoth he, "is near me, but my skin is nearer;" and this he says to justify his taking a little care for himself as well as other folks. Satire has

made free at the expense of "British benevolence," as equally inexhaustible and cosmopolitan, there being scarcely a division of the habitable globe which is not the special field of labouring love to some knot of British philanthropists. An essayist on this very subject, who is keenly alive to the "palpable absurdity" of many of these charitable schemes, gives a candid consideration to the monition that charity begins at home, that there is misery and ignorance and paganism in England enough to absorb all the money, and all the zeal, and all the care of every charitable person in the kingdom; and that all this trouble about converting Red Indians and clothing nude Ashantees is pure folly. This, he contends, is a false, and what he calls a provincial idea. "It refuses to look at the fact of the spread of the British Empire—an empire which indirectly is infinitely wider than that included in the possessions of the Queen, and which, in the largest sense, must be taken to include the influence, social and religious, of Englishmen all over the globe." He shows that this empire goes on increasing without waiting for a perfect shape, or caring that many of its acquisitions are very faintly grasped, and it is therefore, he concludes, in the highest degree fortunate that the wish to do good should have in England the same tendency to go coursing over the earth, or else the advent of English trade and English armed strength would be too often a simple curse to the nations successively selected as their victims.

It is scarcely possible to break off from the general subject without recalling what Pope says on the philosophy of it in the *Essay on Man*:—

"Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,  
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;  
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,  
Another still, and still another spreads;  
Friend, parent, neighbours, first it will embrace,  
His country next, and next all human race;  
Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind  
Take every creature in, of every kind:  
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,  
And heav'n beholds its image in his breast."

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

# The Preacher's Dissecting Room.

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"I SPEAK AS TO WISE MEN."

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No. X.

STOPFORD A. BROOKE.

**I**T is unfair to judge a Preacher by only one sermon. This is an aphorism which is often repeated, and which is never repeated without truth. Every intellectual workman is sometimes unequal to himself. "He is the best General," said the First Napoleon—himself a consummate operator, and also an excellent judge on the point—"who makes the fewest blunders." If you were to judge a general, therefore, by one of these blunders, leaving out of consideration altogether the paucity of his mistakes on the one hand, and the great number and brilliancy of his successes on the other, how cruelly unjust you would be. And yet it is very much the same with the pulpit strategist too. He also has his occasional blunders and oversights, his instances of unhappy conception or feeble performance, his false moves and unworthy endeavours, his occasions when those who value him most see how unequal he is to himself. If a stranger, therefore, were to proceed to judge him by one of these exceptional occasions—by one of these occasions, we say, separated from all others, and placed in a frame, as it were, by itself—how lamentably unfair he would be. The utmost he could ascertain in such a manner would be what the man could do at his worst!

It is to be remembered, however, on the other hand, that a single sermon thus selected at random need not necessarily be a specimen thus exceptional and thus decidedly below par. It may be just as decidedly above par, for all we can tell. Most probably, indeed, according to the doctrine of chances, it will neither be the one nor the other, but something somewhere about the ordinary level of the powers that happen to be employed. And, in any case, to a candid and careful investigator, even one discourse from a man of real mark will furnish ample evidence of the nature and extent of his capabilities in the art. Sometimes an unfortunate specimen (in other respects) will serve all the better to do this. There are certain mistakes of which inferior men are not even capable; there are some falls which bear evidence in themselves that



they have been from a very great height ; and there is a certain way of doing great things imperfectly, which may be as interesting and instructive, to say the least, as doing commoner things very well.

Add to which, in this series of papers, we are not for a moment taking upon us to examine a given number of great preachers in order to publish them afterwards in a kind of class-list, showing who comes first, who second, and so on. It would be intolerable priggishness on our part to attempt it. We are simply endeavouring in all modesty to analyse the works of a few honoured names, with a view of ascertaining, if it may be, how far we ourselves, who desire to be fellow-artists in the same community, may learn from these leading and conspicuous examples, both what to imitate and what to avoid. Any one specimen, therefore, of their abilities,—any one complete organism produced by their skill,—may be fitly taken by us and anatomized by us, without any unfairness to their reputations, and with some benefit, as we hope, to ourselves. And even supposing, as it may, that, as before mentioned, we see a man's worst in this manner, still that worst is undeniably his ; and being his, there can be no possible wrong in fixing the responsibility of it upon him. Where is the hardship of being told, " You can do better than this if you try again " ?

Acting on these principles in the present instance, we purpose to confine our observations on Mr. Brooke as a preacher to the first sermon of his that we stumbled on in opening his volume.\* It bears the name of " The Religion of Signs," and purports to be on these words :—" When the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation. They seek a sign, and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the Prophet."—Luke xi. 29. And it is a sermon, we will say at once, characterized by many excellent points. So far as our judgment goes—and we must be understood, of course, as speaking throughout with this limitation on our words—there are many features in it which we should be glad to discover in many more sermons than we do. It is eminently adapted, for example, for the peculiarities of the present times. The preacher takes the measuring reed of the Bible, or what he conceives to be such, and he applies it with fearless boldness—not to the examination of forgotten heresies and obsolete delusions and perils, but to the evil

\* *Sermons Preached in St. James's Chapel, York Street, London, by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M.A., Honorary Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen.* Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

thoughts, and doings, and dangers of the day that now is. And he does this also, not alone with boldness, but with much moderation and fairness, being evidently anxious, in everything that he denounces and condemns, to allow for the latent and partial good to be found in it, as well as to detect and lay bare the predominant evil. Of the spirit in which he does so, and of the success of his manner on the whole, the reader may judge best by the following extract, which is rather longer than we are in the habit of making, and which contains, indeed, the whole central portion and pith of the discourse as it stands. Leaving out an introductory portion, which is somewhat repetitious and confused, and which makes a reference to previous sermons that need not affect our judgment on the present one, and leaving out also a very brief, fragmentary, and ejaculatory conclusion, which is scarcely an application of the subject, the chief bulk and value of the sermon is in the following words:—

The phase of the spirit of the world of which we speak to-day is that of devotion to signs and wonders.

Men of genius are themselves signs and wonders in the world. How does the world treat them? It does not help them—it does not bring out what is best in them. It makes a show of them, and then dismisses them with a sigh of weariness. They are taken up and flattered till all their strength is drained away. They are polished down till all the angles which made them of use, which jarred upon the splendid dulness, or irritated into some life the lazy indifference of common society, are smoothed away, and the man offends no more by originality. It fills one with pity and anger to think how many who might have been Samsons, and have smitten our modern Philistinism to its death, have been ensnared by the Delilah of fashionable society, and set, “shorn of their puissant locks,” to work in the prison and to make sport for the Philistines. We mourn, and with just cause, the loss of many who, born to be kings, have sunk into willing slaves.

Look at the way in which this devotion to signs and wonders in the world acts now upon the literature of the country. In that sphere it is represented by a craving for “sensationalism” which results in intellectual sloth. Men ask for books which excite, but give no trouble. They have not time, they say, to read slowly, much less to read a book twice over. A book genuinely thought out, but not brilliant, in which the experience of a life of intellectual work is concentrated, has scarcely a chance of success. The public are too indolent to read even a thoughtful review of such a book, unless it be written in a sparkling style and flavoured with a spice of sensation. Except they read signs and wonders they will not read at all. What are the consequences? Men of thought, who are strong of will and believe in themselves, refuse to submit to this tyrannical cry for signs. They persist in writing books of worth and weight, but they do it in a kind of despair, and their work suffers from the dogged dulness which despair creates. Unlistened to and hopeless, they cannot write with the joy which enlivens expression, with the uplifting sense of a public sympathy.

Men of thought, who are weak of will, and whose self-confidence depends upon the public voice, write one book of power and then surrender

their high mission. They enter on the career which demoralizes the finer power of genius—the career of the reviewer and the magazine contributor—and too often end by drifting into the mere sensationalist, writing a book which, like an annual, grows, blooms, and dies in a season. They strain after brilliancy; not brilliancy for its own sake, but brilliancy for the sake of show or favour. They fall into the very temptation which Christ resisted in the case of miracles.

I might illustrate the subject in other spheres than the sphere of literature, but enough has been said to show the operation upon men of genius of this element of the spirit of the world which as a craving for signs and wonders among the Jews, hurried the Saviour to the Cross.

Now, a society tainted with the diseased passion for this class of writing is drifting away from that temper of mind which can frankly accept Christ Jesus, for His is not the life which can satisfy the sensationalist.

Separate it from the moral glory, the spiritual beauty, which rose from it like a sea of light out of inner fountains, and it is a common life enough. Uneventful for thirty years, the story of it, even in the midst of its miracles, is marked by nothing especially exciting. It was in itself eminently natural, unartificial, deep, cool, and quiet as a garden well, passed by preference among rustic, uneducated men, amid the holy serenity of the mountain and the desert, among the gracious simplicities of natural beauty, beside the ripple of the lake, upon the grass-grown hill—seeking even at Jerusalem refuge from the noise and passion of the city in the peaceful village of Bethany, or among the shadows of the silent garden of Gethsemane.

We cannot understand it, we cannot understand Him, we cannot enter into the profound simplicity and truth of His teaching, if we have habituated our mind to morbid excitement, our moral sense to a continual violation of it in both French and English novels, and our emotions to a mental hysteria which destroys the will. This may seem a slight evil, but it is more than we imagine. We should look with fear upon the growth of this temper in English society; it is denaturalizing it. It renders both heart and mind corrupt. It will end by making the life corrupt and society impure. Sensationalism in literature is closely connected with sensuality in society.

Again, take in the present time as another form of the Jewish passion for signs and wonders, the existence among us of men and women with a passion for the false supernatural. The true supernatural is not the miraculous but the purely spiritual, not the manifestation of things which astonish the senses, but the revelation of things which ennoble the spirit. In neither of these ways are the things with which we have been lately favoured truly supernatural. They are abundantly material, and they do not ennoble. The last appearance of the chief prophet has not been characterized by a surplus of spirituality.

Every day, however, fewer persons are likely to be swept away by this spiritual quackery, for as the ozone of scientific knowledge is added to our social atmosphere, these corrupt growths dwindle and die. But it is worth while, perhaps, to say that they enfeeble the intellect, and do harm to Christianity. No man can long float in the misty region of pale speculation in which these exhibitions involve him—speculation which starts from no fixed point, and aims at nothing—nor be tossed about by the inconsequence of the so-called phenomena, without feeling his intellect obbing away, and its manliness departing. They render the reason a useless part of our being.

So doing, they do evil to Christianity; for to conceive Christianity grandly, to expound it nobly, to develop it within our own souls as fully

as possible, and to work for its perfect kingdom, we need to unite to its spiritual power within us "the power of a free, vigorous, manly, and well-cultivated intellect." We need for the work of Christ, not only spiritual life, as the first thing, but intellectual light, as the second.

Again, one of the greatest evils which arise from the encouragement of charlatanry of this kind in connexion with religion—and it is so connected—is, that it protracts the period when the work of science and religion, by consent of their several professors, will advance together. It causes scientific men to think that every thing connected with religion is inimical to the methods of science; it intensifies their opposition to the thought of the supernatural by setting before them a false supernaturalism. It throws contempt upon and degrades the notion of a spiritual world. It increases a credulity on the one hand which leads to gross superstition, it increases an unbelief on the other which leads to gross materialism. The extremes of the two sides are set into stronger opposition, and in the noise which the extreme parties make, the voices of wiser men remain unheard.

One element of good hope, however, attends its appearance among us. The spirit in society which it feeds has almost always, in conjunction with a spirit of unbelief with which it is connected, preceded a revolution of thought. It was so before the teaching of Christianity. It was so before the rise of the Reformation. It was so before the outburst of new ideas, which gave force to the early days of the French Revolution.

I have hope that this blind confusion, this tossing together of the elements of credulity and unbelief, will create, in a reaction from them a rational and liberal faith.

Analogous to this is the endeavour to awake and excite religious sensibility, either by the overwrought fervour of the revivalist, producing an hysterical excitement, which is mistaken for a spiritual manifestation, or by the sensual impressions made by the lights, incense, music, colour, and all the paraphernalia of the Ritualists. I do not deny the real enthusiasm, however cruelly mistaken in its mode of action, nor the good which many of the revivalists have done; nor the good and the enthusiasm which follow the efforts of the Ritualist, but in a certain degree they both agree in this—they try to produce spirituality from without. They make use of stimulants which are unnatural in relation to the spirit, though natural in their relation to the body.

Precisely the same thing is done by those who hunt after exciting sermons, who imagine they repair the ravages of the devotion of six days to the world by an emotional impression on Sunday as transient as the morning dew; who mistake a thrill of intellectual excitement for a spiritual conviction, a glow of aspiration for a religious act, and pleasure in a sermon, for the will to conquer evil.

Now all these things are, under one form or another, the products of the same spirit which in the days of Christ sought for signs and wonders.

The melancholy superstition which is called so ironically spiritualism unfits its devoted votaries for their daily work. Some play with it, and it does them little harm; but others, embarking in it with energy, get into an excited, inoperative, unhealthy condition, in which a quiet Christian life becomes all but impossible, in which duty becomes a burden if it separate them from their experiments, in which it seems better to sit at a table slothfully waiting for a spiritual communication than to go with Christ into the middle of the arena of life and do our duty there against the evil. It is there, in faithful following of Him, that we shall have spiritual communications; it is there, by faithful prayer and resistance



to temptation, by the warfare against sin within and wrong without, that our hearts will begin to beat with the excitement which ennobles, and the enthusiasm which does not decay; it is there, loving our Saviour's spirit above all things, and aspiring to reach His Divine perfection, that we shall enter into the true spiritual world, and feel, not the miserable presences of beings which, on the impossible supposition of their existence, it is a disgrace to associate with, but the very presence of the Spirit of God within us; hear, not a futile and laborious noise, but the voice of God Himself, saying to us, after the conquest of sin or the performance of duty in His strength, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

And as to the attempts of revivalists or ritualists to influence the spirit through the flesh, there is this plain evil, that all stimulants of this character produce each their own peculiar reaction, and are followed in the reaction by exhaustion. Then the passionate emotion must be worked up again by another and fiercer address, or the æsthetic impression which produced the thrill must be again received, but this time by means of a more exciting service. It follows, then, that the exhaustion of reaction is greater since the stimulant has been more violent. So it proceeds, till at last the limit of stimulation has been reached, and the excitement can be aroused no more. Only the exhaustion remains, the craving is still there, and the worn-out votaries of the religion of the nerves and the senses turn back—unable to do without their thrilling sensations—to the old excitements, and go back in the case of revivalism to sin, in the case of ritualism to the world.

Of course we only speak of tendencies, not of persons. It would be absurd to deny that many faithful men have been made by revivalism. It would be far more absurd to deny that there are thousands of devoted men who attach a living meaning to ritualistic observances, and to whom these things are not a form without a spirit, but the natural expression, and therefore to them the right expression of spiritual feelings, who use them, not to create from without, but to embody from within their inner life with God.

But, making this allowance, it seems clear that this form of religious life is not the highest nor the truest form of the Christian life. It encourages that temper of mind which demands signs and wonders as proofs and supports of faith. It is in bondage to ceremonies; it is against our full freedom in Christ Jesus. It says to men, in principle, "Except ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." It denies the equal holiness of all times, of all places, to the Christian heart by asserting the especial holiness of certain times and certain places. It places the priest between us and God as a necessary means whereby alone we may hold communication with God. It asserts the absolute necessity of certain symbolic observances for the reception of any higher spiritual grace from God. This is not the purity and simplicity of Christianity. It is a rehabilitation of those elements in Judaism which Christ attacked and overthrew. It is opposed to the whole spirit of His teaching. He removed the barriers of ceremonies, of sacrifices, of authority, of localized and exclusive sanctities, and He brought the heart of each man into direct communion with the Heavenly Father. As to a priesthood, and its pretensions to interfere between us and God, Christ swept it away with every word and action of His life; and by uniting the individual soul to God, made every man his own priest, and the daily spiritual offering of each man's love in feeling and in action the acceptable sacrifice. "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him."

There is the charter of our freedom, and there is not a word in it of



the necessity of God's grace coming to us filtered through the medium of a priest, or a ceremony, or a sacrament, or a symbol.

To some men these things may be necessary; for some men signs and wonders of one kind or another, ceremonies, symbols, or outward excitements may be required. Let us not deny their needfulness at times, for even Christ made use of miracles. Because some of us can do without them, we must not impose our liberty on others. But we must not allow that they can *give* life, though they may support it; we must not make them of the *first* necessity; we must not imagine that a Christianity not adorned but encumbered with them is anything but a low type of Christianity. We must avow that the insistence on, or the craving for, any form of the religion of signs or the religion of superstitious wonder is an element of disease in the Church analogous to the spirit which helped to bring Christ Jesus to His death."

These sentiments are very bold and manly, very important and true on the whole, and uttered with no little power. There is an impatience, also, of the unreal and superficial, an anxiety for what is true and lofty, and, as we said before, a realization of the important principle that the preacher is dealing with a body of living hearers exposed to present dangers and pressing temptations,—which are worthy of all praise. We like a sermon to speak on the Sunday of that which men meet with in the week; and we like it all the more when it does so, as here, without relinquishing or coming down from the legitimate platform of its text. Sensationalism, ritualism, spiritualism, and a certain description of revivalism furnish legitimate, as well as pertinent, illustrations of the Scriptural topic here discussed. The "parson," therefore, who undertakes to speak of them is not "booming away over the heads of his flock;" he is speaking to their experience and their hearts; he is dealing with matters which they, in turn, have practically to deal with; he is seeking to guide them down here on the earth, not up there on the other side of the clouds of speculation and invention. At the same time he is endeavouring to guide them with the clue of truth in his hands, saying to them in effect by this method, by this application of the Bible to man's experience, "This is what Christ teaches us about life, about life as we find it now, and as it presents itself now to our sight." It would be difficult to give a better ideal of Christian practical work.

But while we honour thus highly the ideal of our preacher, and while we would be very far from speaking slightly—when the measure of the difficulty involved is fairly considered—of the measure of success attained by him, we cannot bring ourselves to regard his guidance as being of a perfectly satisfactory kind. We would put it to himself, indeed, to determine whether his subject has been "thought out" as it should be. How far, for example, can we consider, that the

real meaning of the Saviour in this verse, the real principle which he desired to lay down, is clearly elucidated and enforced? If that verse be analysed it seems to imply. (1.) that there is such a thing as an improper craving after signs and wonders; (2.) that it is a principle with Christ not to satisfy this improper craving; (3.) that it is not a principle with Him, however, in doing this, to withhold signs and wonders in all cases; and (4.) that He was so far from thus absolutely refusing in the case described, that He promised here to all mankind, and to that evil and adulterous generation first of all, a miracle and open "sign" which should be, both in its general character, and also in some of its minor details, like that which was known in Jewish history as the sign of the prophet Jonas. These are some of the features which the passage carries as it were on its surface. Beneath the surface, but not entirely concealed by it, and awaiting exfoliation (shall we say?) by the spade of the expositor, lie other questions such as these:—*When* is the craving for the miraculous improper? *Why* was it so in this case? *Why* did our Lord nevertheless volunteer the sign of His own resurrection? And, generally, what is the proper use and function of the superhuman (sometimes called in confusion of thought the supernatural) in religion? All these questions, we submit, and many more are evidently covered by this Scripture; but how many of them are here replied to? How many of them are even glanced at? The backbone of the whole discourse just amounts to one thought, viz., that it is a mischievous thing to depend too much in religion on the exhibition of signs and wonders. This is not, however, a mere truism, though it may appear so at first sight, because there are many persons, as a matter of fact, who never seem to be even aware of the possibility of an excess on this point.

It is doing a very necessary work, therefore, to expose the error of such minds, and to disperse and overthrow that exceedingly shallow but vulgar maxim in religion, that the true and the miraculous are the same. So far we would thank Mr. Brooke very heartily, and go along with him quite; but, unhappily, he almost seems at times as if he designed to plunge us in the exactly opposite whirlpool of error, even into that error which is just as vulgar amongst minds of another description, and which consists in supposing that every thing miraculous is therefore false, or suspicious at the least, and that signs and wonders have no worthy function (if any at all) in the support of God's truth. Not that such a statement is actually uttered in so many words; in certain places, indeed, our preacher distinctly admits that it pleased Christ to con-

firm faith by his miracles, and, as an implied consequence, therefore, that miracles have a definite use in this way; but the effect of the whole, as already intimated, is to leave us in very much the same confusion, as it may have found us in at the first. The problem of the text, in short, is left unsolved. Is it too much to say, is left untouched? The ultimate teaching of the complete text, that for which all before is a kind of preliminary and preparative contrast, is just this, that Christianity should be supported by the greatest miracle ever known. But what is the lesson extracted from it in this place? Is it not something thus, viz., that the less you have to do with signs and wonders in your religion, and the farther removed you are from the evidence of your senses, the more your Christianity is like Christ?

This cloudiness and partial error in the main deduction, affects some of its illustrations as well. Thus the principle of revivalism is described as being utterly erroneous and unsound, because it craves for signs and wonders, and yet as unquestionably producing some sound and good men. The practices of ritualism, again, are called childish and most mischievous, and yet as being very profitable in certain cases, and almost necessary, in fact, to religious life. Such are the assertions and accompanying admissions which perplex the reader as he runs; a perplexity which is not removed by saying, that "we speak only of tendencies, not of persons;" or that such and such a "form of religious life is not the highest nor the truest form of Christian life," because "it encourages that temper of mind which demands signs and wonders as proofs and supports of faith." For the question remains still unsettled, whether we are not right to a certain extent in demanding such aids and supports; and whether a religion, that affects to stand altogether without them, is not a kind of intellectual fanaticism, a mere "castle in the air." This is the great question, we repeat, to which this Scripture invites us, and in the discussion of which it is able and ready to direct us. We do not say that to pass it by, and all but ignore it, is to "handle the Word of God deceitfully;" but we are very sure that it is not employing it in such a manner as Mr. Brooke himself would approve. No one knows better than he does the deceitfulness of half truths, yet, with a glorious full truth in his hand, he has not given us any more. We are almost inclined to think that he was half conscious himself of this short coming when he refers to his text in the course of his sermon in the following way (p. 195):—"This was His stern answer, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. There shall no sign be given it,'" &c. Would he not

have spoken his own condemnation if he had given that et-cetera at full length?

MATHEMATICUS, M.A.

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## Biblical Criticism.

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Καὶ τί ἔτι λέγω· ἐπιλείψει γάρ με διηγούμενον ὁ χρόνος περὶ Γεδεὼν, Βαράκ τε καὶ Σαμψών καὶ Ἰεφθάε, Δαβὶδ τε καὶ Σαμουὴλ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν, οἳ διὰ πίστεως κατηγωνίσαντο βασιλείας, εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην, ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν, ἔφραξαν στόματα λεόντων; ἔσβησαν δύναμιν πυρὸς, ἔφυγον στόματα μαχαίρας, ἐνεδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας, ἐγενήθησαν, ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ, παρεμβολὰς ἔκλιναν ἀλλοτρίων· ἔλαβον γυναικὲς ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τοὺς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν.—Heb. xi. 32-35.

THE conjunctions coupling the six names enumerated are differently exhibited in different MSS. As they stand in the received text they are very beautifully arranged. Yet the two pairs, τέ, καί, are not to be conceived as designating any special connexion, like *et . . . et* in the sense of “both . . . and;” but τὲ here has the same force as καί; and the object of the writer seems to have been, not to mark some of the names as more closely connected together than others, but simply to avoid the repetition of the same conjunction so many times.

Chronological order is not followed in the sequence of the names. Gideon is named before Barak, though he flourished after him, probably because he was a more famous personage. Samson, also, is mentioned before Jephtha, it may be supposed on the same ground. And David, too, is introduced before Samuel, partly for the same reason, but mainly that Samuel might be placed in close juxtaposition with the prophets, at whose head, in respect to time, he is represented as standing in Acts iii. 24, and elsewhere.

The faith of the individuals here mentioned is conspicuously exhibited in the Old Testament. Gideon believed the announcement made to him by an angel, and confirmed by miraculous signs, "Know that I have sent thee," and he destroyed the altars and groves of Baal, and with three hundred men routed a prodigious host of the Midianites. Barak, recognising the voice of God in the assurances of the prophetess Deborah, and, overcoming the hesitation which at first restrained him from action, engaged in battle with the army of Sisera, and accomplished the deliverance of his country. Samson, believing that he had received his extraordinary strength for the purpose of chastising the enemies of Israel, entered into conflict with the Philistines, and achieved many signal victories over them. Jephtha, taking the promises of God as his encouragement, and impelled by an influence from heaven, subdued the Ammonites, and rescued his countrymen from their oppressive yoke. And how marvellously was the faith of David displayed in his combat with the gigantic Goliath, and, indeed, during the whole course of his life, not only before he reached the throne, but after he became ruler of God's people! And Samuel's faith was conspicuous from his childhood to the day of his death. At no time was its brightness obscured by any such clouds as occasionally darkened the character of some other very eminent saints.

The question may be raised, whether all the individuals mentioned in this verse are to be viewed as not only having manifested trust in God on particular occasions, but also as having really been converted men. Some have repudiated the latter alternative, on account of the questionable subsequent conduct of Gideon, and Jephtha, and Samson, and have maintained that the faith spoken of is not necessarily to be viewed as saving faith. But does not the apostle conclude this chapter with the solemn declaration that these all obtained a good report through faith; and do not the remarkable words which he employs in the last clause imply that they were destined to be raised to full and perfect happiness through the redemption completed under the new dispensa-



tion? Whatever, therefore, might be the faults of some of the individuals named, we must suppose either that their conduct was not so inconsistent with their position as the higher principles of the Gospel make it appear in our eyes, or that they repented of their backslidings before they were removed from this earthly scene.

*Verse 33.* The names of persons mentioned in verse 32 are followed in verses 33, 34, by an enumeration of deeds and events connected with them in a general way. Bengel and others have supposed that the several clauses which now follow correspond individually to the names already mentioned, and describe something connected with each of them in order; but the attempt to carry out this idea speedily demonstrates its futility. Some of the points which are brought into view apply equally to several of the persons specified, and others of them must be referred to individuals neither expressly named by the apostle nor yet included under the general designation of prophets. As the detailed exhibition of particular cases presented in the earlier part of the chapter is followed by a brief yet suggestive list of names, so again these names are followed by a condensed description of sundry remarkable achievements of faith, that the reader may have a glimpse of the boundless field from which illustrations might have been gathered if time had permitted the prosecution of the subject. The names mentioned in verse 32 are a mere specimen of those which the apostle had in his view, and hence, when he proceeds to specify deeds, the amplitude of his stores manifests itself in the ready occurrence of many others besides those of the persons named.

*Διὰ πίστεως* is equivalent to *πίστει* in the numerous examples already specified by the apostle, and describes faith as the moral power or principle by which the agents were enabled to perform their illustrious deeds. The phrase qualifies all the clauses as well as the first.

W. LINDSAY, D.D.

(*To be continued.*)

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### SIN AS A DEBT.

"O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me."—Matt. xviii. 32.

WE have given an exposition of this parable elsewhere.\* The point we now select for observation, is the metaphorical representation that is here given of sin: it is set forth as a debt. Elsewhere we have been careful to point out the differences between sin and debt.† We have seen that sin is always a crime—debt is not; sin is never transferable—debt is. A debt implies the consent of two parties—sin does not, &c., &c. Why should sin, therefore, be set forth by our Saviour in the model prayer which He gave us, and in this parable, as a debt? Sin resembles debt in two respects—

I. It is an UNFULFILLED OBLIGATION. The debtor has an undischarged obligation resting on him from his creditor—the sinner has an undischarged obligation resting on him from his God. We offer four remarks on this unfulfilled obligation.

\* See "Genius of the Gospel," p. 477.

† See HOMILIST, second series, vol. iii. p. 472.

First: It is *criminal*. A debt is not always a criminal thing. In English society there are but few men, however wealthy, who are not in some degree in debt to some one. Credit seems the axle on which the commercial world rolls, but sin is essentially criminal—it is a thing of turpitude in all its forms and phases.

Secondly: It is *heavy*. The debtor in the parable owed "ten thousand talents," which in our money would represent nearly three and a half million pounds sterling—an enormous sum—but this is but as a feather to a mountain compared with the unfulfilled obligation which the sinner owes God. He owes Him not only everything he has, but his very being.

Thirdly: It is *increasing*. The debt is going on augmenting at a terrible rate. As mercies multiply obligation goes on increasing, and mercies multiply every hour.

Fourthly: It is *unrepayable*. The man who owes to his fellow-man the largest sum may, in the course of time, by industry and good fortune, discharge his obligation, but the sinner never can do so, —the arrears are enormous.

As a debt sin is—

II. A CANCELLABLE Obligation. A creditor has the power of cancelling a debt. Acting from a generous impulse towards the debtor, he may strike his pen through the outstanding liability; there is no law to prevent him doing so—this is his prerogative. Thank God, sin is a cancellable obligation. He to whom we owe so much has revealed Himself as the forgiving God. "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and sins." (Exodus xxxiv. 7.)

First: The debt of sin is cancellable, *however great*. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson they shall be as wool." "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake; I will not remember thy sins." (Is. xliii. 25.)

Secondly: The debt of sin is cancellable *through faith in Christ*. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." (Acts xiii. 38.) "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i. 6, 7.) Faith in Christ is essential to produce that genuine penitence of soul which is the necessary condition of pardon. Repentance and remission of sin must ever go together, and there is

no repentance without faith in Christ.

Thirdly: The debt of sin is cancellable *only here and now*. "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Only on earth—not in hell. "Now is the accepted time; to-day is the day of salvation."

CONCLUSION.—The Christian dispensation is the jubilee of the world, its trumpet blast announces the release of every debtor on the simple condition of repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

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#### MAN'S WELL-BEING: ITS CONDITION AND OBSTRUCTION.

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."—Rom. viii. 8.

WE have here—

I. The CONDITION of man's well-being. What is it? To "please God." The expression implies three things.

First: That God is a *pleasable* Being. The Eternal is neither *callous* or *morose*; on the contrary, He is infinitely sensitive and benign. There are existences outside of Him administering to Him pleasure.

Secondly: It is possible for *man* to please Him. This is wonderful. It is wonderful that any creature in the universe, however highly exalted, should possess the power of affording the smallest amount of pleasure to a Being

so infinitely happy in Himself, but it is more wonderful that man, insignificant, fallen man, should have this power, yet it is so. How can man please God? Not by singing eulogistic hymns, or offering complimentary prayers, or observing ceremonial ordinances. Men insult the Omniscient One by endeavouring to please Him in such ways. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord," &c., &c. How then can man please God? (1.) By loving supremely what He loves most. We are pleased with those who love the objects most dear to our hearts. What is the object most dear to the heart of God? Here is the answer: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." It is pleasing to the Infinite to see His creatures giving their affections to Him on whom His own heart is set. (2.) By devotion to those objects which interest Him most. The triumphs of rectitude, the progress of remedial mercy, the advancement of human happiness—these are the things which interest Him: we please Him in proportion to our devotion to these things.

Thirdly: In the pleasing of Him is man's *well-being*. All the numerous theories of man's chief good are absurd in the presence of this proposition. To please the Creator is the *summum bonum* of the creature. Does not this proposition

chime in with all that is true in philosophic thinking? Is man's happiness in a *peaceful conscience*? Then the conscience must have a sense of God's approval. Conscience has to do with God. The fear of His displeasure terrifies it, the assurance of His approval is its heaven. The light of His countenance—His approbation—is the paradise of our moral nature. Is man's happiness in *gratified love*? The strongest craving of the heart is to please the object of its affections. Love deems no sacrifices too great for this; the loving heart is in anguish until it hears the "well done" of the loved one. Is man's happiness in the *full development of his active powers*? Then where can these powers have such stimulus and scope as in endeavours to please the Infinite?

II. The OBSTRUCTION to man's well-being. What is the obstruction? Being "in the flesh." "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." What is meant here by being "in the flesh"? Not merely existing in the flesh: thus we all exist; we "dwell in houses of clay." But it means being in the flesh as slaves, not as sovereigns. Having the flesh for our master instead of our menial, our sovereign rather than our servant. The man who thus dwells in the flesh—

First: Gets fleshly views of *the universe*. All above, around,

beneath him is gross materialism. His eyes are too gross to discern the spiritual significance of things; his ear too heavy to catch the spiritual melodies of the world.

Secondly: Gets fleshly views of *truth*. "He judges after the flesh." If he has a theology, it is a gross and sensuous thing.

Thirdly: Gets fleshly views of *greatness*. He has no idea of greatness apart from splendid costumes, magnificent dwellings, and brilliant equipages.

Fourthly: Gets fleshly views of *happiness*. He associates happiness with whatever pleases the tastes, charms the senses, satisfies the appetites, and gratifies the lusts.

Fifthly: Gets fleshly views of *God*. He makes God such an one as himself, incarnates Him in a human form, and gives Him human thoughts and passions.

Now the soul in such a state "*cannot* please God." It has lost at once the desire and the power to do so. Deeply did Paul feel this when he exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this bondage of sin and death?" But the Gospel comes to enfranchise the soul from the flesh and to restore to it its absolute sovereignty over the body. This deliverance is a new birth. "He that is born of the flesh is flesh, he that is born of the Spirit is spirit."

#### MODEL PRAYER.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."—Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24.

THIS is a prayer that implies a conscious honesty of soul, a strong desire to get at the true and the right. Think of what this prayer is.

I. It is a prayer for DIVINE REVELATION OF THE SOUL TO ITSELF. "Search me, O God, and know my heart." His idea is not that God should search him in order that He might understand what was in him, for he had just declared that God knew all things pertaining to man, understood even his "thoughts afar off;" but in order that God might make him to know himself, that he might lay bare the moral state of his own soul to his eyes. God answers this prayer in many ways.

First: By *providential trials*. God often surrounds a man with circumstances that bring out from his soul thoughts and feelings of which he was ignorant—of which perhaps before he thought himself incapable,—thus, He tries him, tries him as metal is tried in the fire.

Secondly: By *the power of His truth*. He often brings His truth with power to the conscience, and lights up such a flame of conviction as makes hidden things of the heart



manifest to the soul. A knowledge of ourselves is necessary, no science is so important as *self-science*—God alone can teach this.

II. It is a prayer for Divine EXTRICATION OF THE SOUL FROM ITS WICKEDNESS. "See if there be any wicked way in me." Some render this, "See if there be a way of pain in me." Wickedness is a way that leads to pain. How many ways of wickedness there are in the soul. There is the way of carnality, the way of greed, the way of vanity, the way of falsehood, the way of profanity, &c., &c. God alone can extricate the soul from

the labyrinths of wickedness. Like a good shepherd He not only sees the lost sheep in the thicket, but He goes after it and restores it.

III. It is a prayer for Divine GUIDANCE OF THE SOUL INTO THE RIGHT WAY. "Lead me in the way everlasting." The way of wickedness is a perishable way, the best things of the soul perish in it; the way of righteousness is an eternal way, it is the way of everlasting blessedness. In this way God alone can guide. Hence the necessity of the prayer, "Lead me in the way everlasting."



## Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCLXXVIII.)

SPIRITUAL VERITIES.

"Bow down down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge. For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips. That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?"—Prov. xxii. 17-21.

THESE verses begin the third of the five sections into which critics have divided the whole book.

The first section comprises the first nine chapters, and is introductory and principally addressed to youth. The second comprises the tenth chapter up to the verses which contain proverbs generally, though not always, detached. The third comprises these verses to the end of the twenty-fourth chapter, and is more connected and paragraphic in its style. The fourth section includes the twenty-fifth and all the chapters up to the twenty-ninth, inclusive; this section is like

the first, proverbial and sententious. The fifth section extends from the thirtieth chapter to the close, the authorship of which is still unsettled in the region of controversy.

The subject of these verses (which begin the third section of the book) is *spiritual verities*, which are here called "excellent things." By spiritual verities we mean truths relating directly to man's spiritual nature—its moral condition, interests, and obligations. They are the greatest realities in the universe, of greater moment to man than the whole of the material creation. The passage leads us to make two remarks concerning the personal knowledge of these spiritual verities.

I. The experimental knowledge of them is a TRANSCENDENT BLESSING. They are "excellent things" in themselves—things that reveal a spiritual universe, a glorious Redeemer, and an ever-blessed God. But the verses teach that a knowledge of them is a transcendent blessing. They teach—

First: That such a knowledge *affords pleasure*. It is a "pleasant thing." An experimental knowledge of spiritual truths has ever been felt delectable; it is to the spiritual tastes of man sweeter than "honey and the honeycomb;" it fills the soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory. What said Paul? "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge," &c. The verses teach—

Secondly: That such a knowledge *enriches speech*. "They shall withal be fitted in thy lips." It will give thoughts worthy of the lips, thoughts which the lips can speak with a

natural gracefulness and dignity. "The lips of the righteous feed many." The words of a man enriched with heavenly wisdom are pearls that sparkle with the rays of God. The verses teach—

Thirdly: That such a knowledge *inspires trust in God*. "That thy trust may be in the Lord." Man's fall and misery consist in the trustlessness of his heart in relation to God. For the want of confidence in Him, human souls, like Noah's dove, flutter over the surging abysses of life finding no rest for the soles of their feet. This knowledge brings man back to God, and centres him in the *Absolute*. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord." The verses teach—

Fourthly: That such a knowledge *establishes the faith of the soul*. "Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge that I might make thee *know the certainty* of the words of truth." The more a man knows of these spiritual verities, the more settled and unwavering is his faith. He has the witness in himself that God is true. He knows in whom he has believed, &c.

A man to whom these spiritual verities are an experience is not like a feather tossed by every wind of doctrine, but like a tree so rooted and grounded in faith as to stand firm amidst the fiercest hurricanes that blow. Such a man's faith stands not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. The verses teach—

Fifthly: That such a knowledge *qualifies for usefulness*. "That thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee." Men in

all circles of life have questions put to them about the soul and God, duty and destiny; but he only can satisfactorily solve those mysteries who has an experimental knowledge of spiritual verities. Neither scholarship or sageship can do it. Genuine saintship alone can give the satisfactory answer. The "fear of the Lord," that is, wisdom. Another remark is—

II. The experimental knowledge of them is **ATTAINABLE**. After indicating the transcendent blessings of this knowledge, the question comes with urgency—Is it attainable? If so, how? We look to the verses for information, and we find that the method for attainment involves four things.

First: *Communication*. These spiritual verities come to the soul in the "words of the wise." "Have not," says the writer of these verses, "I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge?" Men do not reach this knowledge as they reach a knowledge of scientific truth—by their own researches and reasonings. It is brought to them in a communication—a communication from holy men who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The "excellent things," the subject of this knowledge, is contained in *The Book*.

Secondly: *Attention*. "Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise." What boots the utterance of the inspired orator if he is not listened to? What boots the doctrines of the inspired writer, if they are not studied? There is such a moral deafness in the ear, and it is so dinned with worldly

noises, that unless there is a bowing down and earnest listening, the spiritual sounds will not be caught. Hence, listen. "Hear, and your soul shall live."

Thirdly: *Application*. "Apply thine heart unto my knowledge." You may catch the sound, and even interpret its meaning, and yet not attain to its experimental knowledge. There must be application—application of the heart. All the sympathies of the heart must be interested in it; it must be felt to be the *one* thing.

Fourthly: *Retention*. "It is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee." These spiritual verities may come in *sounds* to the ear, but the sound may die away—may come in *idea* to the intellect, but the idea may vanish from the memory, may come in an *impression* on the heart, but the impression may evaporate as the morning dew; but it must be *retained* in order that the transcendent blessings may be enjoyed. "Keep them within thee." There are many things to drive them from thee; hold them with all the tenacity of thy being.

**CONCLUSION**.—Get this knowledge, brother, whatever other science thou neglectest, get it for thyself. "I have made known to thee," says Solomon. The possession of it by others will be of no avail to thee; thou must get it for thyself. Get it *now*. "I have made known this *day* even to thee." There is no time to lose.

(No. CCLXXIX.)

THE OPPRESSION OF THE POOR.

"Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate;

for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them." —Prov. xxii. 22, 23.

"AFTER the solemn preface in the preceeding verses," says an old author, "one would have expected something new and surprising: but no; here is a plain and common, but very needful caution against the barbarous and inhuman practice of oppressing poor people."

I. THE CRIME PROHIBITED.  
It is the oppression of the poor.

First: It is a *common* crime. The poor have always been oppressed. They do the hard and the trying work of the world. In *trade*, they build our houses, construct our vessels, weave our fabrics, man our vessels over the peril of the deep, and thus produce the wealth of the country. The fortunes of our rich men are trees that have been planted by the hand and watered by the sweat of the poor man's brow. From the fruit of that tree he is kept off by the hand of baughtiness and violence. The single grape that falls from its clustered branches to the ground shall sooner be allowed to rot in the earth than be put kindly into his hands. In *agriculture*, the poor man toils as a beast of burden in the hot suns of summer and the bleak winds of winter, in order to convert sterility into fruitfulness. His labours give value to the estates of the landlord, and cover the fields with golden crops in autumn: yet out of all he can scarcely get the meanest shelter for his head, the humblest wrappage for his clothing, and the scantiest fare for his support. In *war*, he fights the battles of despots and nations, falls with

millions of his class on the field of slaughter and of blood, builds thrones and constructs crowns, yet he gets no honour or reward: others wear the laurels and gain the prizes. Thus the oppression of the poor man is, alas! a common crime.

Secondly: It is a *heinous* crime. To "rob the poor *because he is poor*" is a great enormity. To rob any man is wrong, to oppress the richest brother is a crime, but to rob the poor "*because he is poor*" is of all oppressions the worst. Rich men will not suffer themselves to be wronged, poor men cannot help themselves; and therefore justice requires that we should be more careful to guard their rights. In this crime there is the basest *cowardice*, and the most heartless cruelty. Cowardice, because the victim is powerless; cruelty, because the victim is already in distress.

II. The PUNISHMENT THREATENED. "The Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them." No crime is more frequently and forcibly denounced in the Bible as abhorrent to the Eternal Father than that of oppressing the poor. "What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of Hosts." (Isa. iii. 15.) The accumulation of Divine vengeance is heaped upon this sin. (Ps. cix. 6-16.) Ahab's judgment testified to the fearful spoiling of those who spoil the poor. (1 Kings xxi. 18-24, comp. Isa. xxxiii. 1, Hab. ii. 8.) The captivity in Babylon was the scourge for this wickedness. (Ezek. xxii. 29-31, comp. Jer.

xxi. 12). And when the deeds of secrecy shall be brought to light, how black will be the catalogue of sins of oppression! How tremendous the judgment of the oppressor!" (Mal. iii. 5.)

First: God is the *counsel* of the poor. He "will plead their cause." In courts of human judicature there are sometimes barristers generous enough to stand up and gratuitously defend a poor and unprotected prisoner. This God does for all the poor. If they have no friends amongst men, they have one Great Friend who will ever be true to them.

Secondly: God is the *avenger* of the poor. He is not only the counsel, but the judge. "He will spoil the soul of those that spoiled them." "He that robs the poor," said an old author, "will be found in the end the murderer of himself."

### (No. CCLXXX.)

#### INTERDICTED CONDUCT.

"Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul. Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee? Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set."—Prov. xxii. 24-28.

These verses give us three subjects interdicted—

I. AN INTERDICTED FRIENDSHIP. "Make no friendship with an angry man," &c.

First: *There are men of malign natures.* They are "angry" and "furious." One of the greatest perplexities to me connected with the Divine procedure is the constitutional malignity of some men. Why the Benevolent God should send

men into the world with natures temperamentally unkind and malicious astounds me. That there are such men must be obvious to all that have any connexion with their race. Men without honey, but full of gall; waspish men, whose delight is in stinging; canine men, whose language is a snarl.

Secondly: *Friendship with such men must be avoided.* Indeed, real friendship with such men there cannot be, but there may be such an intimate association as to be very pernicious. (1.) The bad temper of such a man may *infect his companion*. "Lest thou learn his ways." Such are the susceptibilities of our nature, that we catch the temper of those with whom we mostly associate, whether it be good or bad. Ill temper is as propagating as good; the seed of hemlock will multiply as well as that of wheat. A malign and furious tempered man will, by his words and manners, so irritate and chafe the soul of his companion as to become ultimately infected with the same foul disease. (2.) The bad temper of such a man may *endanger his soul*. To catch such a temper is ruinous to the soul. A disposition to anger and revenge is an incipient devil within, a devil that will snare and ruin our spiritual nature.

II. AN INTERDICTED CONTRACT. "Be not thou one of them that strike hands," &c. Solomon has more than once before prohibited suretyships.\* "The language," says a distinguished theological writer, "evidently implies not a universal prohibition of suretyship, as of

\* See "HOMILIST" on chap. vi. 1-5, xi. 15, xvii. 18.



a thing wrong in itself and under whatever circumstances, but an advice and admonition to special caution and circumspection. There may be cases in which it is more than justifiable—in which every claim of necessity and mercy renders it an imperative duty. But still we are not entitled, for the sake of one, to expose others to risk. We are not entitled to overlook and disregard either the risks and rights of other creditors, or the interests of a dependent family. The reason, too, assigned here for the caution shows us that in our dealings with others a prudent regard to our own interests is a perfectly legitimate motive. "If thou hast nothing to pay"—that is, if on the failure of the party for whom you have become responsible you have not enough to make good your suretyship—"why should he take away thy bed from under thee?" This may seem a very rare case, yet such creditors there have been, and may still be, whom selfishness and resentment drive to the extreme of harshness, and whose irritation perhaps is exasperated by their seeing that but for the said suretyship the party would have come to a stand and to a settlement earlier, and with so much the less loss to those whom he has involved. We are commanded "to love our neighbour as ourselves;" but to do for him what might expose us to having our very bed sold from under us, is to love him *better* than ourselves, which is a step beyond the Divine injunction. And so many are the cases in which it is most difficult for us to get at the precise state and prospects of the person—friend

though he may be—who makes the application, that there is hardly anything that calls for greater care, or warrants, in the eyes of all sensible and candid people a larger measure of reserve, and even, generally speaking, of steady refusal.

III. AN INTERDICTED ACTION. "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set." There is probably a reference here to the divisions of the land of Canaan. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."—Deut. xxxii. 8. The verse includes three things—

First: *All men have certain rights.* They have personal, social, political, religious rights. They have rights that are inalienable, and rights that have been obtained—primary and secondary rights. Indeed, all duties imply rights.

Secondly: *There are standards set up by our fathers by which the rights of man are to be determined.* They have been set up in the works of our best ethical writers; in the works of our legal authorities, of which Blackstone is the chief; and, above all, in our Bible.

Thirdly: *These standards are to be respected.* They are not to be removed. We must not go beyond the boundary, and encroach upon the rights of others; we have plenty of liberty in the sphere allotted to us.

Some have given these words an application too absolute and universal. The stereotyped Conservatives, both in politics, theology, and religion, would

have them to mean that we must bind ourselves for ever to precedents, be eternally loyal to old usages, and keep things as	they have ever been. This is absurd, and contrary to the tenor of the Bible and progressive instincts of the human soul.
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## The Dial.

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THE MEMORIAL ADDRESS OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER LEAGUE TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THEIR ASSOCIATION.

WE insert the following address in these pages, and our reply to it, because the *HOMILIST* was the chief factor in the creation of the enterprise, and its most loyal friend through all its stages to the end. Had there been no *HOMILIST*, the Association would not have existed. In volume vi., first series, we wrote an article on the necessity of a reformation in the journalism of this country, and the means necessary for its accomplishment. That homily did the creative work. Our ministerial friends of all denominations through every part of the kingdom, received a deep conviction of a new duty—a duty lying beyond their ordinary sphere, a duty touching the interests of their country and the world. They responded to our call, and entered heartily into association with us in the work of journalistic reformation.

It is, therefore, only just and gracious that the power which spoke the enterprise into existence should register its closing scenes.

TO THE REV. DAVID THOMAS, D.D.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—

In the year 1855, when the Penny Press was an unknown institution, the paper duty maintained our periodical literature at a price that placed it beyond the reach of the masses, and when the necessity for some great improvement in journalism was beginning to be felt by earnest Christian men, you conceived the idea of the *DIAL NEWSPAPER*.

In the words of the prospectus which you issued, you aimed at “the printing, publication, and sale of a newspaper or newspapers devoted to the following principal purposes (that is to say): the diffusion of sound

education and Christian and liberal principles ; the promotion of the arts and sciences, and the encouragement of a healthy literature ; the preservation to the people of the full right of self-government, and the obtaining for all classes a just and complete representation in Parliament, and a fair participation in the administration of national affairs, so that capacity and merit form the only title to office ; retrenchment in all parts of the public expenditure ; the fostering of a moral tone of feeling among the people in relation to all public questions, and impressing upon them the necessity of bringing conscience to the hustings and carefully discharging their duties, as well as energetically upholding their rights ; the promotion of the rights of conscience and of Protestant Christianity throughout the world ; the amendment of the law, with a view especially to the more expeditious administration of justice ; the advocacy of rational temperance, sanitary improvement, and an enlightened observance of the weekly day of rest ; the obtaining for the public a full knowledge of diplomatic negotiations ; the cultivation of friendly relations with foreign nations, and the recognition of the principle of non-intervention in their affairs, and of arbitration as, whenever practicable, the means best becoming Christians of deciding political and international disputes." You asserted the need of a paper which should adopt as its guide the maxim that "RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION," and should estimate and discuss all questions, social, political, and ecclesiastical, not in the spirit of class, party, or sect, but according to truth and fact, in the light of equal justice, unswerving honesty, and Christian ethics.

To give effect to this grand idea, you linked it to the principle of co-operation. And to protect from any possible unexpected personal loss all persons whom you induced to join the enterprise, you waited until the passing of the Limited Liability Acts, whereby every person was protected against liability for any further sum beyond that which he voluntarily subscribed for. The National Newspaper League Company Limited was accordingly incorporated under the Joint Stock Companies Act, 1855, and completely registered under the Act of 1856, with shares of £10 each, upon which a deposit of only £2 was ever required from the shareholders. The undertaking culminated in the establishment of a strong and powerful company, which published the *Dial* newspaper, and purchased one moiety of the *Star* newspaper ; and notwithstanding the unexpected birth of several new daily papers, and much factious opposition, would have gone on in increasing prosperity, until it realized all your and our own expectations, *but for circumstances over which you had no control*, and to which it is not now our purpose to refer. It is a pleasure, however, to inform you in reference thereto, that at a meeting of the shareholders of the National Newspaper League Company Limited, held at Radley's Hotel, on the 19th August, 1869, Edward Carlile, Esq., of Queensbury, Clapham Park, in the chair, the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to :—

"I. That in view of the winding-up of the 'National Newspaper Com-

pany Limited,' this meeting deems it necessary, in reviewing the history of the Company, to record its admiration of the indefatigable energy, great courage, and self-sacrifice which have signalized all the acts and policy of the chairman, Dr. David Thomas."

"II. That on referring to the '*Dial Register*,' and other records of the history of the Company, it is shown that *several thousands* of shareholders were enrolled as the immediate and direct result of Dr. David Thomas's extensive influence, and incessant and disinterested labours; that, yielding to the solicitations of many shareholders, who considered that no efforts but his could complete the great movement of which he was the *unpaid promoter* and originator, he relinquished for many months ministerial and literary labours, and at the *greatest personal inconvenience and expense*, devoted himself, amidst much public misrepresentation, to the arduous and to him uncongenial, work of addressing meetings in all parts of the kingdom, on the importance of infusing a higher moral tone into the newspaper press than it then manifested, and of placing journalism within the reach of the masses; that the effect of his publications, his addresses, and the succeeding operations of the '*National Newspaper Company*' had a most beneficial influence on the country, tended to the reduction in price, the elevation of tone, and the extension of the influence of the Daily Press, and resulted in the *largest union* of political and religious reformers and philanthropists on record, and the establishment of a company for carrying out their views in the Press, whose constituency of *nearly 10,000 shareholders*, with an immense available capital, made it the largest Company of the day."

"III. That this meeting expresses its highest appreciation of the uncompromising and steadfast fidelity with which (notwithstanding the available capital of the Company, and the service which it would have been to the Directors in carrying out the objects of the Company), Dr. Thomas has resolutely adhered to, and successfully prevented, all attempted violation of the promise to make no call on the shareholders; and although he has not been able to protect the Company from dissolution, congratulates him that the first deposit of 40s. a share is all that has ever had to be paid by the shareholders, and that even of that sum a portion will yet be returned to them, and this, too, notwithstanding the complications with which he has been surprised, and which have been working around and within the Company."

At another meeting of shareholders it was determined that a committee should be framed for the purpose of making to you some further communication as to the general opinion entertained as to your conduct and services in connexion with the enterprise. Afterwards upwards of a THOUSAND GENTLEMEN having written desiring to form a fund, it was agreed that a certain sum should be presented to you, not with a view to recompense you, which we know would be impossible, nor simply for the sake of providing you with monies, which we know would be unnecessary, but for the purpose of repaying to you an ascertained amount of money, which you expended out of your own pocket to defray the early expenses

of the Company, and have hitherto declined to receive back from the shareholders. But still more especially has this course been adopted because the shareholders *desired an opportunity* of testifying their hearty appreciation of your generous acts and noble policy throughout. We trust that whatever disappointment you may experience in the untimely destruction by other persons of your great project, you will permit us to remind you that it is not alone *that* which has been destroyed, but also *that* which has been accomplished, that should be a subject for contemplation. And we do not hesitate to say, that for one man to have enrolled 10,000 others in such an enterprise as this, and that, too, in defiance of vested interests and stubborn and energetic hostility, is an accomplishment altogether unique in contemporaneous history. And that you should have done this, not for self-advancement, of which you had no need, but from patriotism and high motives, and at the same time have made those sacrifices to which we have already referred, is a fact which redounds as much to your honour as also to your ability.

Signed by order of the meeting held at Radley's Hotel  
on the 11th July, 1870.

HENRY WATTS (Doctors' Commons),  
Chairman of Meeting.

EDWARD CARLILE,  
Auditor to the Company from the year 1858  
until the year of its winding up.

WM. B. BULL,  
Secretary to the Company, from the year  
1863 until June 1870.

#### DR. THOMAS'S REPLY.

GENTLEMEN,—

I thank you with a heart, though somewhat saddened by disappointment, yet relieved from a burden which has pressed heavily on it for many a year. The buoyancy of twelve years ago seems to have returned to my nature; I feel the old sunshine breaking on me. Though you have touched upon the history of the enterprise, you may be interested to know its inceptive thought. When the idea of a war with Russia, about fourteen years ago, was agitating the mind of this country, and all classes became inflamed with the passion for arms, I read in the columns of the *Times* newspaper one morning an article commencing with this sentence:—"Where are the doves?" I happened to be amongst those of my countrymen who possessed a conviction, the most profound and glowing, not only of the immorality, but of the flagrant



impolicy of such a war. The *Times* went, with all its mighty force of satire and argument, against my strongest views and feelings on the subject, and there was no organ of equal authority to represent and advocate the convictions of those who agreed with me. There were little sect journals, but their influence on the nation was as nothing. There were only a few dailies, and some of them were dying—none of them had a circulation or a name that gave them much influence. Penny daily newspapers had no existence then; the *Times* had no competitor; it was an absolute autocrat in the realm of journalism. The necessity for another truly *national* journal deeply impressed me on that occasion, and out of the deep necessity grew the conception of the *Dial* plan. I have wrought hard to work out that plan to a successful issue. I have addressed large and hostile meetings in the leading towns of the empire. A record of many of those meetings will be found in the *Dial Register*. There also may be read an account of many of the difficulties which we have had to encounter and the slanders we have had to rebut. We expected, of course, the newspapers to oppose us, nor were we disappointed. The little sect organs barked at us wherever our steps were heard, and the more avowedly liberal and religious their professions, the more canine the snarl. Some of them, such as the *British Banner*, the *Patriot*, and the *British Standard*, have barked themselves to death long ago.

The reduction of the duty on newspapers established the penny press in England, and this led to a modification of our scheme, and ultimately forced us to a junction with the *Morning and Evening Star*, then under the editorship of Mr. Samuel Lucas, brother-in-law of Mr. John Bright, M.P. We invested in that paper £17,500, on the assurance that the paper was more than paying its expenses, that no fresh plant or machinery would be required for many years, and that it would adopt and work out all the principles laid down in the *Dial* Prospectus. Not many weeks after our union, I made the bitter discovery that a mistake had been committed. I found that the *Star* had always been a losing concern, that it required at once the outlay of £5,000 on new machinery,

and any alteration in the conduct of the journal was so strenuously opposed, that all attempts at improvement were hopeless. The same staff remained, impregnated with the ideas and spirit of what is called the "Manchester School"—a school which, whatever its merits, was at that time very unpopular in London. It is true that the *Star*, after our union, paid two or three small dividends; but these arose not from its improved circulation, but from the advertisements of an extraordinary number of joint-stock companies that came into existence. Finding that by its un-national spirit, its literary inferiority, and its miserable management, it sacrificed the confidence of the original *Dial* shareholders, and began to lose regularly at the rate of from £2,000 to £3,000 a year, I determined to bring our connection with it to a close, so as not only to prevent our shareholders from having another call made upon them, but to return to them a portion even of their *first* deposit. Though the dissolution came not in the way that I wished it—came by the clandestine doings of those whose names I shall not mention, and whose conduct I will not trust myself to characterize—I am thankful it came. In leaving the *Star* in the hands of Mr. John Bright, M.P., and his co-proprietors, we came out with a loss of £9,500.

I am grateful to be assured by you that you do not regard the enterprise as altogether a failure. It is certainly, as you say, something to have indoctrinated the public mind with true ideas concerning the powers and obligations of journalism;—something to have so impressed at least 10,000 men, who, for the most part, had been indifferent to the character and influence of the Press, as to induce them, by the power of conviction, to take upon themselves legal obligations varying from £10 to £200 each; the total sum in all amounting in liability to £240,000;—something to have been useful in obtaining the repeal of the taxes on journalistic literature, and to have helped in the establishment of a cheap Press in these realms;—something to have influenced some of the chief journals of the country to do what they never did before, report the leading movements of all religious bodies, regard-

less of ecclesiastical distinctions. It has been said that if I had devoted the time and energy to ministerial work which I have to this, the results would have been far more useful to my race. With the £240,000, it has been said, I could have built forty good churches in England, and that the difficulty of obtaining money for building churches would have been nothing compared to that encountered in obtaining it for an object for which men at first had no sympathy whatever, and against which many had strong prejudices. Well, if I had built these churches I don't know that much greater good would have been accomplished. What boots fine churches unless the pulpits are occupied by Christ-inspired men, whom nature and grace have fitted to elevate their race. How many fine ecclesiastical buildings in England are doing more harm than good! But I have not neglected ministerial work while labouring in this undertaking. I have built schools for the children of the poor amounting to nearly £2,000, where about 300 or 400 children are every day receiving instruction from competent teachers, without any Government assistance whatever. I have enlarged my own church at the cost of £3,000. I have published twenty-six volumes of the *Homilist*, and other works, all of which have obtained a very large circulation. I started the Working Men's Club and Institute Union, over which the late Lord Brougham presided, and which has established in the kingdom already upwards of 100 clubs. I originated the University for Wales; wrote the first letters on the subject; drew up and moved the first resolutions, and helped to secure the first £1,000. This sounds like boasting, but I am not an egotistic man; and those who know me best will acquit me of this infirmity. But this much I have been tempted to say in response to that part of your address in which you kindly bid me remember, "that it is not alone that which has been destroyed, but that which has been accomplished, that should become subject for contemplation." I know with Thompson "that success makes fools admired; makes villains honest; and that all the proud virtue of this vaunting world fawns on success and power, howe'er acquired." Failure or [not, it has taught me several important lessons.

It has taught me the power of faith. I believed with all the strength of my nature, as I believe now, in the necessity and feasibility of this scheme, and it was this faith that helped me to do what perhaps has never been done in the history of the world before, band 10,000 men together in a legal contract to educate the nation by means of the Press. It has taught me the pernicious character of sectarianism. The sects, I have found, will only love their own—the divinest thing outside of them they will drag to the Cross. The sectarian preacher, deacon, and journalist have been, from first to last, our most unscrupulous and inveterate foes. It has taught me the rampancy of the mercenary element in English society. As the funds of the Company increased, mercenary spirits gathered about me in the form of agents, scribblers, managers, directors, &c. They hovered over the funds like hungry eagles over a dead carcass. It has taught me that to work out a great and good idea one must have great and good men. Little men cannot take in a great idea, still less can they fairly represent it. If they talk or write about it they bring it into disgrace, and bad men have not that vital sympathy with the good thing that will secure an honest service. I know not which of the two has been the greatest curse to this enterprise—the wicked or the weak. It has taught me the importance of good management. Many have blamed me for not having kept the power in my own hands. Had I done so, the result, they declare, would have been different. But I could not see it my duty to surrender the office of a minister either for that of a journalist or the manager of a company. I therefore resolved to leave the management in other hands, and the management, not strong enough either to stand against fraud and treachery, or to meet the journalistic demands of the age, ruined the enterprise which I started in faith and wrought for as an enthusiast. Bad management would soon ruin the Bank of England, whilst good management often elevates a costermonger into a prosperous and influential merchant.

Again I thank you for the expression of your approval and for your generous gift. I am once more assured of the dis-

interested philanthropy with which you and the great bulk of the original\* shareholders entered on this undertaking. In joining it you were not influenced by the hope of profit (for such a hope was never held out by me), but by a desire for usefulness. To have made the acquaintance of men of this spirit (which I have in every town in England and Wales), and to have had the honour of working with them for a few years, are sufficient atonement for many disappointments, and compensation for all my labours.† No true effort to serve our race is lost; each carries with it its own reward, and goes on in its beneficent influence upon the world.

“The smallest effort is not lost :  
Each wavelet on the ocean tost  
Aids in the ebb-tide or the flow ;  
Each rain-drop makes some flow’ret blow :  
Each struggle lessens human woe.”

\* Could the shares have been kept in the hands of the original shareholders the Company would have met with a different destiny. But a large number passed into other hands, some through death, and not a few by the false representations of mercenary men, who endeavoured to get the whole into their own possession. These men, who came into us and were not of us, ruined the enterprise. It is, however, a gratification to me to know that the arrangements of the Company at the outset, were such as to guard each shareholder from any pecuniary suffering or inconvenience. In newspaper enterprises, which are characteristically risky, this is somewhat extraordinary. In 1826, the great publishing house of Murray started a paper called the *Representative*, in association with Lockhart and Disraeli; it lived six months, and lost £50,000. Two years ago, a newspaper called *The Day*, started by noblemen, had a similar history; it reached the Bankruptcy Court in a few months, and its proprietors lost some £60,000.

† From the roll of the noble men with whom this enterprise has brought me into friendly intercourse, there is one whose name deserves a special record here—Mr. Edmund Beales, now County Judge. He joined me almost at the beginning and continued faithful unto the end. A man more incorrupt in principle, more devout in spirit, catholic in religion, and invincible in his loyalty to conscience, it has never been my privilege to know.



## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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KARDOO, THE HINDOO GIRL. By a ZENANA MISSIONARY. London: The Religious Tract Society.

IN the Preface the author says:—"The following narrative is a faithful description of Hindoo life as it was some years ago. Indeed the domestic habits of the people have undergone but little change since the time of which the history treats. The preparation of their food of various kinds, their modes of dress, the style of their houses, the seclusion of their women, and all such family matters, remain nearly as they then were. But much light has found its way into those dark abodes. There is now generally a more correct and clearly defined idea of the character of Christianity than was attainable by Kardoo while in her father's house; and its indirect influences have penetrated into abodes where no profession of its doctrines is made." This is a very interesting little volume for children on Mission subjects.

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HE IS MINE. By E. KENNEDY. London: Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row.

THE author tells us "that the idea wrought out in this volume occurred to him several years ago; and the several papers constituting the book have been composed at considerable intervals. The subjects, from first to last, have been thought over, and written in the form of meditations, in which one contemplates Christ from very diversified stand-points; and considers whether, in each of the capacities in which He is contemplated, we may not say of Him with the soundest reason, on Scriptural grounds, and with the strictest propriety—*He is mine*." The various sections of this book will be read by the devout with interest and profit. The author is rather stiff in his orthodoxy, and somewhat unctuous in expression; still the work is of intrinsic value. It contains many soul-solacing and soul-strengthening thoughts.

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THE PATTERN PRAYER. By REV. FRANCIS COURDILLON, M.A. London: Religious Tract Society.

THIS volume contains thirteen brief discourses on the "Lord's Prayer." They are short and spiritual, pious, plain, and practical.



## A HOMILY

ON

### *An Implied Charge Set Aside.*

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“And when the Scribes and Pharisees saw Him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto His disciples, How is it that He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?”—Mark ii. 16.

**M**ANY of the Jews had two names; and it is generally supposed that Levi, in whose house was prepared the feast which Christ shared with “publicans and sinners,” was one of this class. His other name was *Matthew*. It is not necessary that we should adduce in regular order the proofs on which this opinion rests. Suffice it to state that in no list of the twelve disciples with which we meet in the evangelical records does the name Levi occur. Now how does this come? The explanation seems to be—and to my mind it is perfectly satisfactory—that the name Matthew is given to him in place of Levi. This explanation accepted, all difficulty vanishes. Levi’s father’s name was Alpheus; and his occupation was that of a collector of customs—most probably at Capernaum. At all events the call to be an Apostle was addressed to him one day as he sat “at the receipt of custom”—the place or office where the dues were collected. Although Levi was a publican of the inferior sort, we are inclined to think favourably of him as regards his *character*. It does not follow, because a class is bad, that every individual of the

class is bad. Sailors in general are not too well-conducted, but we all know that there are excellent men among them ; and Levi might be an exception to the generality of tax-gatherers. There was nothing in the work which he had to do, to render him dishonest and unkind ; and it is not so likely that he would have been led to follow Christ had he been a notoriously wicked man. His prompt obedience shows that he was acquainted with Jesus, and at least disposed to look on him as the Messiah. It speaks well, moreover, for his character, that he does not appear to have thought twice before complying with the call with which the Saviour thought fit to honour him. To his credit it is recorded that he “arose and followed Him ;” and to indicate his appreciation of the call, and as a kind of formal leave-taking of them, Levi determined to entertain his friends. Accordingly a feast—such as he had it in his power to give—was made ready for them ; and at this feast both Jesus and his disciples were guests. How things went on and off we are left to conjecture ; but the entertainment gave serious offence to those bitter enemies of Christ—the Scribes and Pharisees. Had Jesus consulted them, they would have advised Him—considering the low and despised company that was to be there—to absent Himself from Levi’s feast. He did not, however, ask counsel of them, but acted on His own responsibility ; and when they observed Him in the house of Levi, seated at the same table with the very worst characters, the Scribes and Pharisees were greatly scandalized. It puzzled them that Christ should be on such familiar terms with “publicans and sinners.” This “new thing under the sun” satisfied them that He could not be the long-promised and expected Saviour ; and, first opportunity, they put the question to His disciples (they durst not put it, the cowards that they were, to Christ Himself)—“How is it that he eateth,” &c. Their object was to impress it on the

disciples, that one who could mingle so freely with the scum of society could not be the Messiah ; but Christ, who happened to be near enough to hear their query, defeated them. What an appropriate and crushing reply—"They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick"! Instead of his feasting with miserable sinners demonstrating that Jesus was not the Saviour, it proved the exact contrary to all who could take the right view of it, as will be shown in the sequel of this discourse.

In fixing attention on the question with which the Scribes and Pharisees plied the disciples, we would observe, by way of commencement, that the phrase "publicans and sinners" is intended to describe persons of more than ordinary vileness. By the Jews, to whom the Roman yoke was irksome in the extreme, those who took part in gathering the Imperial taxes and customs were scorned and hated. But for the consequences, they could have felt in their hearts to inflict all manner of evil upon them. In their estimation, publicans were essentially mean and depraved—fit only to be the companions of *sinners*, in the emphatic sense of the word. In the New Testament the term *sinners* is often applied to the Gentiles, on whom the chosen people were accustomed to look down with ineffable contempt. Their notion was, that the Gentiles were not worthy of the privileges which they, as the people of God, enjoyed. They were "sinners"—desperately bad. That this is the meaning which should be attached to it here, we shall not take it upon us to say ; but if it refer not to the Gentiles, we must understand by it the moral dregs of the Jewish nation. Publicans and sinners were just the openly vicious ; and, as Levi was himself a publican, we can easily believe that, in the eyes of the Scribes and Pharisees, there were many degraded characters present at the "great feast" which he made in connexion with the call to the Apostleship which he got from Christ. It is

note-worthy that in His answer Christ does not deny that there sat at meat with Him in Levi's house publicans and sinners. He admits the badness of the guests. They were—some of them at any rate—all that they were represented to be. Nor does He deny that He ate and drank with publicans and sinners. This He could not have denied, had He been ever so willing, for the Scribes and Pharisees saw Him reclining at the same table with the openly vicious, and partaking of Levi's hospitality. His eating and drinking with them was not a thing which He had any wish to conceal, and is to us a most interesting circumstance, offensive as it proved to the proud, self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees.

How a fact of this description brings out the Saviour's humanity! 'Tis a beautiful belief that He who came from heaven, and the choicest place there—the Divine Father's bosom—to redeem us, assumed our nature. Christ's was a real body of flesh and blood, and differed not from those which enwrap our spirits. No more than we, could He dispense with food; and, as there is in us an instinct for society, so He was of a social disposition. We do not find that He shunned society. He liked to be alone sometimes, and who is there that does not? but not always. When Levi invited Him to his house to partake of "the good things of this life," Jesus did not refuse. He was happy to be Levi's guest, and none the less happy that there were to be others at the table, and these the offscourings of the community—"publicans and sinners." I am not aware that Christ ever refused an invitation to eat and drink, come from what quarter it might. No doubt, a public character like Him, and popular besides, met frequently with individuals who begged that He would permit them to supply His physical wants; and, if He accepted Levi's invitation, why should He have declined similar invitations? On the supposition that He was,



during the exercise of his public ministry, in the habit of going with those who made Him welcome to their houses, and what entertainment they could afford, it becomes clear to us how He contrived to live, although He earned no money, and worked no miracles in His own behalf.

Coming out of the synagogue at Capernaum, one Sabbath-day, and entering into the house of Simon and Andrew, He found Simon's wife's mother sick of a fever; and what did He do? We are told that He "took her by the hand and lifted her up;" and what was the result? "Immediately the fever left her;" the best evidence of which was, that she proceeded then and there to minister to them, Christ included. Mark distinctly asserts that she "ministered unto them;" and this statement, taken in conjunction with Christ's presence at the feast of Levi, sheds light on a question which is apt to suggest itself to readers of the Gospel, viz., how did Christ live? To a large extent He was indebted to the generosity of His friends for the means of subsistence; and the more that we reflect on the fact that He formed one of the party to whom Levi gave a feast, the more human will we feel Jesus to be, and the more will it interest and instruct us.

It will not do to answer the question we are considering by denying that He ate and drank with publicans and sinners; for it does not admit of dispute that He did. What is more, we have no desire to dispute the point; for perplexing as was Christ's attending a feast at which there were publicans and sinners, to the Scribes and Pharisees, it does not at all perplex us. We flatter ourselves that we can satisfactorily account for the social phenomenon; and proceed to make the attempt.

In dealing with the question before us we shall, in the first place, treat it *negatively*, and, in the second place, we shall treat it *positively*.

First, then, negatively; and under this division I remark:—

(1.) *That Christ did not associate with publicans and sinners because He entertained too humble an opinion of himself.*

In every town and village there are those who keep company with their inferiors. They make companions of those who are beneath them, in social position, in education, in mental power, and moral goodness; and, in numerous cases, the reason is, that they have no pride, and not as much self-respect as they should have. They have too low an opinion of themselves; and hence they see no one of whose companionship they would feel ashamed. If they thought more highly of themselves, they would act differently. But Christ's associating with publicans and sinners did not arise from thinking too humbly of himself. We grant that there was no pride in His nature, and that humility was in Him a conspicuous virtue; but we do not suppose that He under-estimated himself. His opinion of himself was just, neither too high nor too low. He was as free from error as from sin. Right well He knew that He was intellectually and morally superior to the publicans and sinners who partook with Him of Levi's feast. His eating and drinking with them, therefore, must be ascribed to something else than over-humility.

(2.) *That Christ did not associate with publicans and sinners because He was not choice as to His society.*

In the selection of companions we can hardly be too particular. We entirely approve of Solomon's advice—"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not;" and the same authority forewarns us, that "a companion of fools shall be destroyed." We are almost sure to become like those with whom we associate, whether they be good or bad. Their very thoughts flow in upon us, and take

possession of us. We imitate their speech and behaviour, and are not conscious that we do. Others perceive the moulding influence of our associates more readily than we do ourselves. It is an utter mistake to fancy that we can mix with the ungodly and the immoral, and not sustain moral injury. In support of the Apostle's declaration—"Evil communications corrupt good manners," a thousand facts might be produced. A young man once said to me, "I have all my life sought the company of those wiser and better than myself." I observed at the time that the principle was a good one; but what numbers there are who habitually disregard it! It cannot be affirmed of them that they *choose* their company. They are as ready to go with one as another, and to spend an evening in this house as in that; but none such can plead the example of Christ. We blame those who are not choice as to their society; and if so, how dare we allege that Jesus was careless with whom He associated? His sharing a meal with publicans and sinners does not prove His carelessness in this respect. Indeed, it is not true that He chose publicans and sinners for his companions. If He did, ought not we to copy after Him? As well may it be averred that pupils are the associates of their teachers, or patients of their physicians. If Christ had companions, they were the twelve whom He called to the Apostleship; and it should not be forgotten that His relation even to them was more that of a master than a companion.

(3.) *That Christ did not associate with publicans and sinners because of his sympathy with them.*—It is needful perhaps that I should briefly explain this remark. In one sense Christ HAD sympathy with publicans and sinners. He had the sympathy that one human being has with other human beings, and He had the sympathy for them that a righteous and benevolent person uniformly has for the unholy and the wretched. In so far as they were

good—and surely they were not WHOLLY bad—Christ had sympathy with them. In another sense he had no sympathy with them. It was not their wickedness that drew Him to them; and He did not seek contact with them because He relished their society as lovers and doers of wrong. As sinners He pitied them, and was desirous to save them, but He had not a particle of sympathy with them. Amid His Father's angels in heaven how different would have been His feelings! The Scribes and Pharisees, in their hostility to Him, argued that, because Christ ate and drank with publicans and sinners, He was like them and fond of their company; but in thus arguing, they exposed themselves and did Him gross injustice. Settle it that Christ was a perfectly holy being, and the conclusion is inevitable that His associating with publicans and sinners was not due to sympathy with them. Since morally He and they had nothing in common, He could not sympathize with them.

We hasten, in the second place, to treat the question on which we are commenting positively, that is, to explain why Christ did eat with publicans and sinners.

And I observe:—

(1.) *That to have refused Levi's invitation would not have been courteous.*—To be rude is neither manly nor Christian. The saints are expressly enjoined to practise courtesy. "Be courteous," writes the Apostle Peter, in the third chapter of his first epistle; and if courtesy is a Christian duty, we may infer that there was no rudeness about Christ. He never spake a really unkind word, or did a really unkind act. It was not in Him to be uncivil. He was the essence of civility; but would it not have been unkind to have refused Levi's invitation? It strikes us that it would. Non-compliance would have hurt Levi's feelings; and he would naturally have wondered that Christ should call him to be an Apostle, and yet refuse to be present at a

feast made in His honour, or on His account chiefly. True courtesy required that Jesus should accept the invitation to the banquet, no matter who else might be there. It was meant for a kindness to Christ; and the outgoings of a generous heart should never be checked without a very sufficient reason. For their own sakes we should let people do us a kindness when they are so inclined, inasmuch as the oftener that we do kind acts, the stronger grows the principle of kindness within us. At the time, Levi was given to hospitality, and it would have been discourtesy in Christ to have told him that, though he might prepare a feast, He would not grace it with his presence.

(2.) *That in accepting Levi's invitation Christ displayed a spirit of condescension.*—Meanness and pride are detestable, but condescension is a lovely feature of character. There is nothing lovelier. We admire and respect all who gracefully stoop to those beneath them, as if on an equality with them. Do we love a lady the less, that she enters the poor man's cot and makes herself at home with the inmates? Do we love Queen Victoria the less, that she now and again, when residing at Balmoral, deigns to visit the Highland peasantry? Her condescension charms us, and it reminds us of the condescension of a Higher than she—Jesus Christ. He was Levi's superior—infinately his superior. When, then, he consented to take meat in his house, He manifested a spirit of condescension; and the condescension shone out the brighter, that the company was largely made up of "publicans and sinners." Was it right that Christ should teach us to stoop to those beneath us? If it was, He did well to go to Levi's feast.

(3.) *That by eating and drinking with publicans and sinners, Christ exhibited a friendly disposition towards them.*—This is so obvious that I need not dwell upon it. Enemies



do not visit each other, or share each other's hospitality. They never meet when they can avoid it. Before they can eat and drink comfortably together, a reconciliation must take place. Our houses and tables are open to none but those with whom we are on friendly terms; and to eat and drink with another is regarded, the world over, as a token of friendship. Now, was it important that Christ should impress it on all classes—publicans and sinners not excepted—that He was their friend? Admit that it was, and what plan could He have adopted equal to that of sitting at the same feast with them? After that, how could they doubt that Messiah was deeply interested in them?

(4.) *That attending Levi's feast gave Christ an excellent opportunity of doing publicans and sinners good.*—None of the Evangelists informs us how Christ behaved at Levi's feast. It was not requisite that they should. Each can form an idea from His conduct how He would demean Himself in the circumstances. It's a poor imagination that can't supply the particulars; and the question deserves consideration. Would it have been wise in the biographers of our Lord to have left nothing to the imagination? As Jesus was the principal guest, it would devolve on Him to give thanks and to lead the conversation. On Him all eyes would be fixed; to Him all ears would be turned. There would be no improper subject introduced, or remark passed. He would select their topics of talk, and so discourse upon them as to delight and benefit the listeners. His grand object would be to convince them that He was the Messiah; and it is not improbable that souls were converted on the occasion, and put in the fair way of being ultimately saved. Bad as the publicans and sinners were, they were not like the beasts that perish—soulless. They had souls, be their state what it might, and they were not lost to that degree that they could not be saved. While

men are on earth they are redeemable. "Past redemption" should not be written on any man's brow. As the lines of the paraphrase run—

"For while the lamp holds on to burn,  
The greatest sinner may return."

The efforts of Christ savingly to enlighten publicans and sinners show that in His judgment they were salvable. There sat not one at Levi's table whose salvation was an impossibility; and we would fain persuade ourselves that the words of Jesus were "spirit and life" to not a few of the publicans and sinners with whom He humbled Himself to eat and drink in the house of Capernaum's collector of customs. Be that as it may, the feast gave Him a capital opportunity of doing good to those who were there by invitation, or with the provider's sanction. They might be shockingly bad; but if they were, there existed the greater necessity for Christ trying to improve them. They may have been neglected by the Scribes and Pharisees, who were hated to the core, by their Stand-by,-for-I-am-holier-than-thou spirit; but if they were, it was the more imperative that Christ should interest Himself in them; and His exertion would be the likelier to issue in success, that He stooped so willingly and so far to instruct, save, and sanctify them. Had He kept them at a distance, what good could He have done them? Had He, in mixing with them, treated them haughtily—made them keenly feel the difference between Him and them—He would have hardened instead of softening them; confirmed them in their evil habits, instead of enabling and disposing them to strip them off. A friendly bearing was essential to usefulness among them; and no question but there was more hope of converting the publicans and sinners of His day than there was of converting the more respectable classes. For one thing, publicans and sinners were less under the influence of prejudice than the Scribes

and Pharisees ; and for another thing, they were completely free from the spirit of self-righteousness. It was worth while attempting to save them ; and Jesus was the readier to accept Levi's invitation, that He would at the feast have a fine opportunity of making known in their hearing the truth that sets free all who receive it. Herein mainly lies the explanation of His eating with publicans and sinners. Where should a physician spend his time and strength but among those who stand in pressing need of his services ? Christ, among publicans and sinners, was emphatically "the right man in the right place ;" and had the Scribes and Pharisees been genuinely pious, good, and charitable, they would have put the most favourable construction on what they saw in Levi's house, and would have refrained from asking, "How is it that He eateth," &c. One could not have blamed the disciples had they replied by asking, How is it that ye don't teach the ignorant, guide the erring, lift up the fallen, and comfort the miserable ?

Let me, in conclusion, my Christian brother, point you to Christ at the table with publicans and sinners, and bid you "go and do likewise." Despise no class in society, however poor, ignorant, degraded. Your Master did not, and you should not. The more unhappy and wicked that your fellow-creatures are, the stronger is their claim on your pity ; the more earnestly should you pray for them, and the harder should you toil to save them from the woes that crush, and the evils that threaten them. I do not urge you to make companions of the known vicious, but don't yield to a fastidious or sceptical spirit in relation to them. Don't treat them as chaff that cannot be changed into solid grain. Bring yourself into contact with them. Be at the pains to convince them that you love them, and desire their present and eternal well-being. If need be, eat and drink with them. By keeping aloof from them,

you never will be instrumental in saving them. There is vastly too much Phariseism in the Christian Church. Were there more brotherliness and sisterliness towards the fallen of our race, fewer of them would year by year sink lower and lower, till they drop into that fiery abyss out of which there is no escape.

*Belfast.*

G. CRON.

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## Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

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OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHILIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections :—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

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*Subject :—*PHASES OF A PIOUS SOUL.

*(Continued from page 208.)*

“Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me,

For I am desolate and afflicted.

The troubles of my heart are enlarged :

O bring thou me out of my distresses.

Look upon mine affliction and my pain :

And forgive all my sins.

Consider mine enemies : for they are many,

And they hate me with cruel hatred.

O keep my soul, and deliver me :

Let me not be ashamed : for I put my trust in Thee.

Let integrity and righteousness preserve me :

For I wait on Thee :

Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.”—Ps. xxv. 16-22.

HISTORY.—See HOMILIST, page 139.

ANNOTATIONS.—Ver. 16.—“*Turn thee unto me and have mercy upon me.*”

The original means “look upon me;” the meaning is, “look upon me in mercy.” God has looks of justice that will scathe the sinner, looks of power that will shake the universe. “He looketh on the earth and it trembleth,” &c. But the suffering suppliant here wanted the look of pity and compassion. “*For I am desolate.*” The word “desolate” means loneliness. He felt deserted and forsaken by his fellow-men, even by his avowed friends. There are few feelings more depressing than the sense of loneliness. “*And afflicted.*” What his peculiar afflictions were at this time cannot be ascertained.

Ver. 17.—“*The troubles of my heart are enlarged, bring thou me out of my distresses.*” “The troubles of my heart have they enlarged: from my distresses do Thou bring me out.”—Alexander. The streams of the ordinary troubles of his soul had swollen into a flood, which heaved and surged within him.

Ver. 18.—“*Look upon mine afflictions and my pain, and forgive all my sins.*”

The first clause is a repetition of the idea contained in the 16th verse, and the last clause is a repetition of the petition contained in the 11th verse. He connected his sufferings with his sins, and these sins he desired to be cancelled and forgiven. Affliction often calls our sins to memory, and the memory of our sins urges appeals to Heaven for forgiveness.

Ver. 19.—“*Consider mine enemies: for they are many: and they hate me with cruel hatred.*” “The agency of wicked foes in causing his distresses, which had been referred to in verses 2, 15, 17, is here again brought into view. In the margin, the expression ‘cruel hatred’ is rendered ‘hatred of violence,’ and violence includes the idea of injustice and cruelty. ‘Man to man,’ says an old writer, ‘is more crafty than the fox, more cruel than the tiger, more fierce than the lion, and, if left to himself, man to man is a devil.’”

Ver. 20.—“*O keep my soul and deliver me.*” “Soul” here means life; it means, “O keep me.” “*Let me not be ashamed.*” This means, let me not be confounded or disappointed; “let not my confidence in Thee be destroyed.”

Ver. 21.—“*Let integrity and uprightness preserve me.*” This expression is supposed to mean one of two things—either the integrity and uprightness of God, or the integrity and uprightness of himself; *i. e.*, he means either let the integrity and uprightness of Thy character be manifest in my deliverance, or let my integrity and uprightness be preserved in my afflictions. We accept the latter as the more admissible.

Ver. 22.—“*Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.*” The word “Israel” stands here, as elsewhere, to represent all the people of God. The prayer means, deliver all Thy people out of their troubles.

ARGUMENT.—This section of the Psalm is its second appeal of a devout soul to God; the other section was the meditation of a devout soul upon God.



HOMILETICS.—The text is an appeal to God on behalf of self, and on behalf of society.

I. Here is an appeal on behalf of SELF. The appeal for self is for three things—deliverance, forgiveness, and preservation.

First: For *deliverance*. (1.) Deliverance from suffering. The suppliant is in some great suffering, a suffering which he represents by the expressions “affliction,” “desolation,” “troubles of the heart,” “distresses,” “pain.” We are unacquainted with the particulars of his trials, but they were evidently very great and crushing; it is from them that he prays for deliverance. The good, in passing through this world, have always had their trials. The sainted ones on high are those who “have come out of great tribulation;” all the voyagers to the celestial shores have had their storms; all the pilgrims to God’s Canaan have had a path rugged and thorny, and beset with perils. “The road to heaven,” says an old author, “is soaked with the tears and blood of the saints.” “It is through much tribulation that we have to enter the Kingdom.” Who can deliver us? Only He who of old divided the sea, smote “Rahab,” and wounded the dragon.” (2.) Deliverance from enemies. “Consider mine enemies, for they are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred.” David’s enemies, whoever they were, were numerous and ruthless. Elsewhere he speaks of them as ravenous beasts. “Many bulls have compassed me about: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.”—Ps. xxii. 12. Every good man has his enemies; those who, if they aim not at his life, aim at those principles and interests that are dearer to him than existence. They “are enemies to the cross of Christ.” Christ said to His disciples, “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.” He who hates, with a profound malignity, God and His saints, animates the ungodly, and “dwells in the children of disobedience.”

The language of the prayer for deliverance from sufferings and enemies implies the suppliant’s belief in two things. (1.) That the deliverance must come from mercy. “Have mercy upon me.” Justice does not require that suffering

man should be delivered ; on the contrary, justice requires that his sufferings should become as torturing, immeasurable, and interminable as hell. If man is to be delivered, mercy must come to his deliverance. It is mercy that must heal the bleeding wounds, hush the furious storms, and trample the enemies in the dust. (2.) That mercy would interpose if God would only notice the suffering. "Turn thee unto me." And again : "Look upon mine affliction." And again : "Consider mine enemies." The idea is, if Thou wilt only turn a glance on my sufferings, Thy heart will be touched, and I shall be delivered. Perhaps the suppliant felt in his deep soul that, because mercy did not come, the Great Father was not aware of his condition. He was disposed to ascribe the non-intervention of Divine mercy on his behalf to the fact that God was not acquainted with his position. This was anthropomorphic. Yet this mode of considering God is natural, if not necessary, to man ; we argue that if a tender father does not come to the relief of his suffering child, it is because he does not know it. Hence the appeal, "Turn thee unto me." Look at my sorrows, and Thy heart will be touched, and mercy will bound to my relief.

The appeal is—

Secondly : For *forgiveness*. "And forgive all my sins." This prayer implies (1.) That he traced his sufferings to his sins. If a man reasons, he will do this ; whether he reasons or not, his conscience will force him to do it. As a fact established by philosophy, and pronounced in Scripture, the sufferings of all moral beings spring from sin. This is the root of the pestiferous tree ; sin is the gall in the cup of life. Wherever you see suffering, you may infer sin. "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind ?" (2.) That his sins had to do with God. "Forgive all my sins." All sin has a reference to God, whether it be directed against the laws of nature, society, or Christ. Hence, in another place David exclaims, "Against Thee only have I sinned." God's government is one ; His commandment is exceeding broad. Wrong in any form or department of life is a sin against him. Suffering suggests sin, and sin suggests God.

(3.) That God's forgiveness of his sins was necessary to his deliverance. He knew that his sins were the cloud that cradled the storm that was now pelting him with its fury, and he appeals to God to blot out the cloud and make His heavens calm and bright again. Forgiveness of sins is the prerogative and delight of Jehovah. The appeal is—

Thirdly : For *preservation*. (1.) Preservation of life. "O keep my soul." This means, "O save me." How much is involved in the preservation of a *man*? The preservation of all his faculties, prerogatives, interests. (2.) Preservation of confidence. "Let me not be ashamed." He had trusted in God; this had been his power, his comfort, and his glory for many a year. He deprecates the loss of this trust. When a soul loses its trust in God, it is like the eagle that has lost its wings; instead of basking in sunny azure, it must wallow in the dirt; like the star that has lost its centre, instead of rolling in radiance, and swimming in sunshine, it must rush into blackness and darkness for ever. (3.) Preservation of character. "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me." If a man loses his honesty, his rectitude, he loses everything that is valuable. Character is everything to a man, out of it must bloom his paradise or flame his hell. Well may a good man, therefore, pray for the preservation of his character.

II. Here is an appeal on behalf of SOCIETY. "Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles." There is nothing selfish in genuine piety; the man who prays and struggles only for his own salvation is utterly destitute of genuine religion. His creed may be correct, his prayers frequent and fervent, his religious devotions irreproachable and unremitting, yet if his soul goes not forth in earnest desires for the good of humanity, he has not the root of the matter in him.

First: Genuine philanthropy is the *natural outgrowth* of piety.

Some have called philanthropy the child of piety; the relationship is nearer than that. A child may live and grow independently of his parent, but genuine philanthropy cannot live without piety. It is the branch of which piety is the root, the limb of which piety is the head. As the growing

acorn necessarily runs into branches and foliage, piety runs into sympathy with the race.

Secondly : Genuine philanthropy is the *ritualism* of piety. The piety that shows itself merely in psalms and hymns is spurious. "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Again : "Pure religion and undefiled before God is this, to visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction." This is the ritualism of true piety. Over and over again the Bible assures us of this. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out into your house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine house?"—Is. lviii. 6, 7.

The worship, then, that God requires, the worship of genuine piety, consists not in complimentary hymns or eulogistic prayers, or bodily genuflexions, or sacramental rites, but in *philanthropic deeds*.

The prayer of David, "Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles," then, is a prayer of genuine piety. What is philanthropy? Here it is in poetry :—

"A sense of an earnest will  
To help the lowly living,  
And a terrible heart thrill  
If you have no power of giving :  
An arm to aid the weak,  
A friendly hand to the friendless.  
Kind words, so short to speak,  
But whose echo is endless.  
The world is wide, these things are small,  
They may be nothing, but they are all."

MILNES.

## A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Iona, nearly opposite the Island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19-21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

*Subject: SOUL MILITANCY.—EPH. vi. 10-17.*

*(Continued from page 212.)*

**H**AVING offered exegetical remarks on all the verses of this passage in our last Number, we proceed to our homiletical suggestions. As a full discourse on this passage appeared in the HOMILIST from our pen some years ago,\* our remarks now need only be most brief and sketchy. Our observations will be arranged under three general headings, the soul's foes, the soul's strength, and the soul's weapons.

**I. THE SOUL'S FOES.** "We wrestle not against flesh and blood." The passage teaches the following things in relation to the antagonists of souls:—

First: They are *spiritual* personalities. They are *spiritual*, not "flesh and blood." They exist apart from matter—apart from all animal incarnations. They are *personalities*. We cannot accept the interpretation of those who regard Paul as speaking here only of evil principles. If language means

\* See First Series, vol. vii., p. 217.



anything, personal agents are here indicated. *A priori* reasoning renders the existence of such beings probable; human experience and the Bible place their existence beyond all reasonable doubt.

Secondly: They are *wicked* personalities. "Spiritual wickedness," or, as the margin has it, "wicked spirits." They are out of sympathy with God; they are in bitter and practical hostility to all that is divine, benevolent, and happy.

Thirdly: They are *diverse* personalities. They differ in their make and their rank; they are not all of the same nature and measure of faculty, nor of the same rank in the universe. There are "principalities," "rulers," and "powers" amongst them. Some, as compared to others, may be as wasps to vultures, as mosquitoes to dragons.

Fourthly: They are *organized* principalities. They are under one head, here called the "devil." "That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." There is one gigantic intellect that manages and marshals the whole:—he who seduced our first parents, he with whom Christ battled in the wilderness—the Satan of God, the Apollyon of man. These hosts of evil spirits are not left to themselves; they are welded together by one master intellect. "Devil with devil damned firm concord hold." They are managed by force and fraud, all of them. The passage suggests that under his control they act—(1.) *Craftily*. Hence the expression, the "wiles of the devil." All his movements are cunningly methodized, for such is the meaning of the word "*wiles*." These evil spirits attack us in ambush; they steal upon us slyly and stealthily. They act (2.) in *darkness*. "The rulers of the darkness in this world." Where do they reign? Where ignorance spreads her gloom: in the cold region of atheism, where the mental energies are benumbed, and in the tropic realm of superstition, where the soul is stirred into an agony of fear, and scared with the horrid forms of its own creations. Amidst the gloomy recesses of ignorance they rear their throne; through the districts of intellectual darkness they prowl about in search of their prey. They reign where depravity beclouds the heart, where passion is stronger than

principle, the senses than the soul, the love of the world than the love of God; whether that be amidst the districts of heathenism or civilized life, in the marts of business, the temples of devotion, or the flowery scenes of gaiety and pleasure. They enshrine themselves amidst the benighted chambers of an impure imagination, they haunt the atmosphere of pollution, impregnate it with their spirit, causing it to stimulate the unrighteous zeal of the selfish to fire the passions of the carnal, and to swell the vanity of the ambitious and the proud. They reign where sorrow and suffering darken all. They delight in misery. The wretchedness of the indigent, the sighs of the distressed, the groans of the oppressed, and the agonies of the dying gratify their malignant natures.

II. THE SOUL'S STRENGTH. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." The soul requires tremendous strength to grapple successfully with these mighty spirits of evil. What is the strength required? It is nothing less than *Divine*. It is to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. But what kind of Divine strength is required, for strength of all kind is from the Lord? Is it *muscular*? No. Samson, with his herculean physical force, fell beneath these spirits; an evil genius touched him, and the giant fell as a child. Is it *mental*? No. Men of the greatest intellect, and of the loftiest genius, have not been able to stand for a moment before these spirits. It is not by this "might or this power" that souls can stand before these infernal hosts; it is *moral* strength—(1.) The strength of faith in the Absolute faith in that which changes not, which is true to man as man, which is independent of times and circumstances—faith in the Everlasting. With this faith men participate in the omnipotence of God, work wonders, and dare the universe. Men, through this faith, have "subdued kingdoms," &c. (2.) The strength of love for the supremely good. Love, when it is fastened even upon the frail and the imperfect, gives strength to the soul—strength to nerve a mother for the most trying services, strength to brace a patriot for the thunders of the battle. But when centred upon the Eternally Good, its

strength is increased a thousandfold ; it gives the soul a power that "never faileth," a power that "endureth all things." (3.) An invincible attachment to the right. To "be strong in the Lord" is to be strong in sympathy with the right. It is to prefer the right with hell than the wrong with heaven. It is this moral strength alone that will enable us to "stand against the wiles of the devil," and to battle successfully the host of wickedness. This strength makes a man more than a conqueror, enables him to glory in tribulation, and shout triumphantly in the agonies of death.

III. The Soul's WEAPONS. The panoply is here described. It consists of two parts—the defensive and the offensive implements.

First: The *defensive* implements. What is the defensive? "Truth." This is the girdle which belts the loins with strength, and binds all the other parts of the panoply together so as to protect all the vital parts. "Righteousness." This is the "breastplate." The man who lacks integrity can offer no successful defence to the foe ; the dishonest man is vulnerable at every point. "The Gospel of Peace." This, like the boot of the old Roman conqueror, makes the soldier firm in his step and terrible in the echo of his tread. "Faith." This is the "shield," protecting the whole body. Faith, not in creeds, but in Christ, is the true shield of moral soldiership. "Salvation"—that is, the hope of salvation. This is the "helmet." As the helmet guarded the head of the Roman soldier, the hope of salvation protects the soul. Let despair come, and the head of the soul is wounded, and the whole system endangered.

Secondly: The *offensive*. What is the offensive? "The sword of the Spirit." The true soul has not only to stand its ground, to maintain its position, to keep its territory, but to advance, to extend its boundaries, to prosecute an invasion ; it is to conquer all other souls to Christ, and the weapon is the "Word of God." This is the sword by which the Christian soldier has to cut his way from soul to soul through the whole world—"For the word of God is quick and powerful, and

sharper than any two-edged sword," &c.—Heb. iv. 12. God's Word is the truth that slays error, the love that slays selfishness, the right that slays the wrong, the happiness that slays the misery of the world.



## Germes of Thought.

*Subject: SAUL IN THE CAVE AT ENDOR.*

"Bring me up Samuel."—1 Sam. xxviii. 11.

**D**ID Samuel actually appear to Saul? Some say yes, some no. There are three theories concerning the re-appearance in Endor of the grand old prophet to the eye of the soul-distracted king. First: That God did actually present him either in his real personality or in vision. No one doubts the power of the Almighty to do this. He could have called the old prophet out of his grave in an instant, and made him stand, as was his wont, before the trembling king; or he could have done what would have answered the same purpose—presented him in effigy, given an apparition of him faithful to life. But would the God of truth, who had denounced necromancy and witchcraft, grant His sanction to a vile imposture? Another theory is—Secondly: That Satan presented him either in his real personality or in vision. We cannot believe that Satan has power to raise the dead, or even the power to produce a faithful image of a true man. If he had, would the Great One allow him to disturb the holy dead? Another theory is—Thirdly: That the woman got the good old Samuel so correctly personated as to deceive the king. This is *possible*, for the woman was a professed sorceress: she got her livelihood by it: living in the neighbourhood she was likely to know all the circumstances of the case, and the condition of Saul. The monarch's mind predisposed him to such deception; he went to Endor, not as a sceptic, but as a believer—he wished it—the strongest wish of his

soul was to see Samuel: the season was favourable—it was night. But this is not only possible, but even *probable*. The woman's assumption, Whom shall I raise?—as if she could raise any one—the falsehood put into the mouth of Samuel, “To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me”—Saul's tardiness in discovering Samuel—“What form is he of?” For such reasons we adopt the last theory.

But we have to do with the cry of this soul-distracted God-deserted man in the dark cave at Endor. “Bring me up Samuel.”

I. This is the cry of a soul CONSCIOUSLY DESERTED OF GOD. All communications with the spiritual world were closed from Saul now. “The Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.” Like all unregenerate men, he had deserted God: he had said in his heart, as all men say: “Depart from me, I desire not a knowledge of Thy ways.” And now God said to him: “Depart from me ye cursed,” &c.

First: *God does sometimes desert the sinner even in this world.* “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” “Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.” “Now they are hid from Thine eyes.” He deserted Samson, now He deserts Saul; Saul is left without God.

Secondly: *The consciousness of this desertion is the greatest misery.* Who can describe the anguish of a soul under the deep feeling that it has lost its God for ever? What anguish must have been in that cry, “BRING ME UP SAMUEL.” O for one more word from God! O that those mute heavens would break their silence and bring me one more message from the Eternal! O that Samuel would cross my path again, and drop once more a word of counsel in my ear! There is no orphanage so bad as the orphanage of a soul—a soul that has lost its God. The child that has lost its human parents may get on in life without them; often when thrown upon their own resources orphans succeed even better than if their parents had lived; but a soul without its God cannot get on—it lives to sink deeper and deeper for ever into ruin.



II. This is the cry of a soul PROFOUNDLY CONVINCED OF THE VALUE OF A ONCE NEGLECTED MINISTRY. Samuel in his lifetime had been the faithful minister of Saul: he had anointed him as king; he had administered to him many a Divine counsel; offered on his behalf many a prayer, and furnished him with many an example of righteousness and religion. But the proud monarch had neglected, depreciated, if not despised, all this heavenly ministry for his good. Now in the gloomy cave of a foul impostor he deeply felt his loss, and his whole nature yearns with an intense anguish to see Samuel's form, to hear Samuel's voice once more. Is not Saul in this terrible juncture of his history a type of all those who will pass from this world into the great eternity, having neglected the redemptive ministries of earth? Will they not, in some cave of the universe a thousand times darker even than Endor, cry out, O to enter that old Church again; to sit once more in the family pew, and to hear again some of the stirring sermons that once fell on the ear? O that those who were wont to bring to me the glad tidings of peace would enter these gloomy regions and say a cheering word to me! "*Bring me up Samuel.*" "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for if they escaped not," &c.

III. This is the cry of a soul THAT HAD BECOME THE VICTIM OF DELUSIONS. How absurd the man's request! Had he a shadow of reason for believing that this miserable woman had power to raise the dead—power to bring a spirit from its celestial enjoyments to this unhappy earth again? And yet he believes this—so believes it that he not only goes in the darkness and stillness of night to Endor for this purpose, but whilst there regards Samuel as standing before him and talking to him. "And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself." And then he hears the old prophet speak to him. "Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up," &c. All this was *delusion*; the man's mind under a sense of guilt and Divine desertion had lost its balance; his intellect had been hurled from the throne, and his imagination, under the

despotism of a guilty conscience, filled his soul with ghastly phantoms. Men talk of a sound mind in a sound body, but there is no sound mind without a sound conscience—a conscience freed from the sense of guilt, and attuned to the everlasting harmonies of right. Reason in the atmosphere of a guilty conscience is like the eye amidst the shower of pyrotechnic lights, dazzled with false visions. We are told that God sends the damned strong delusions, so that they believe lies. Imagination is a terrible faculty, when swayed by a guilty conscience. What visions it can unfold—what voices it can utter! It can create a subjective world, whose firmament is as black as sackcloth, whose tenants are fiends, whose stormy atmosphere is rent by lightnings, and loaded with shrieks of anguish. As we build up our houses and our cities out of the rough materials taken from the earth, so the imagination of a mind consciously deserted by God will build up its world of woe out of the corrupt materials of its own heart.

IV. This is the cry of a soul PLUNGING INTO THE DEPTHS OF DESPAIR. After the communication came to his ear from the imaginary Samuel, a communication dictated by his own agonized conscience, we are told that he “fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.” The girdle of hope was snapped asunder, the joints of his soul were loosened, and the limbs became useless. Bunyan represents Despair as a giant, with a cap of steel on his head, a breastplate of fire, standing in iron shoes, and a club in his hand. Truly he is a giant; he knocks the strongest man prostrate in a moment. Although Saul rose again and went forth to battle at Gilboa, the blow which despair had given him rendered him unable to cope with the Philistines. He appeared on the mountains of Gilboa against his enemies, but he had no heart; Despair had dug its grave, and buried it; so that “Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same

day together." When despair comes, a hopeless darkness settles over the soul. The course of sin leads to despair. Every sin a man commits he quenches a star in the firmament of hope. As he steps onward, one by one the bright orbs faint from his sight, until at last the sky of his soul is in sackcloth. Or, to change the figure, a man pursuing a course of sin is like a man walking with a heavy burden towards some terrible precipice, with his back to the setting sun, the shadow of his person and his burden deepen and widen with every step, until at last it enshrouds him in midnight, and he tumbles into ruin.

CONCLUSION: The moral of the whole is this—the well-being of humanity consists in loving fellowship with the Eternal Father.



"Quench not the Spirit."—1 Thess. v. 19.

THE Writing of the Epistle to the Church at Thessalonica was the result of the report from Timothy of the state of affairs in the Church after he had been there, at Paul's request, to instruct and encourage them under the trials they had been called upon to bear (1 Thess. iii. 1, 2, 3) for Christ. They, as a Church, had their excellencies and defects. One of the greatest faults observed by Timothy was insubordination and want of discipline. The members frequently disobeyed the injunctions and advice of their ministers. The result was, that the ministers were disheartened, and knowingly neglected their duty to reprove, advise, exhort, and guide. Paul wrote strongly on this matter (1 Thess. v. 12, 13, 14.) Our text and context furnish us with a series of practical suggestions for Church Government. Our text teaches us—

#### I. THE OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON MAN.

The Holy Spirit operates like fire. "Quench not." It is fire we quench. Like fire—

First: *The Spirit burns or destroys.* It destroys everything that is destructible. Everything that is opposed to God is destructible, *e.g.* (Romans vii. 24), the *corruption* of our nature.

The Spirit seeks not to destroy our NATURE, but merely the *corruption* of our nature. Contrast the gentle tenderness of the Spirit in its Divine work of mercy and in its judgments. The burning of the cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrha, was fierce in its terrible grandeur. But the burning out of the corruption of our nature is gentle and tender, so that the nature itself may not be injured. How appropriately, therefore, under metaphors, the Spirit is likened unto a dove (Matt. iii. 16.) Also, to a Comforter (John xiv. 16). The Spirit seeks to destroy in us as appertaining to the sinfulness of our nature—(1.) *The carnal mind* (Romans viii. 6, 7, 8). (2.) *The Friendship of the World* (James iv. 4); (3.) *Our besetting sins* (Heb. xii. 1; Romans viii. 15.)

Secondly: *The Spirit purifies*. Fire purifies metals from dross, such as iron, silver, gold. The Spirit purifies our nature. It does so by—(1.) Enlightening the understanding (John xv. 26; John xvi. 7-11). (2.) Purifying the heart, the seat of the affections, and the fountain of accountability to God (Prov. xvii. 3). (3.) Liberating the will. The ungodly man is a captive, bound and led by his passions. The miser is a captive to his lust for gold. The drunkard is a captive to his lust for drink. The statesman frequently is led captive by his ambition. Ambition impelled Napoleon Bonaparte to wade through seas of blood to the pinnacle of greatness. Napoleon III., through ambition, trod in his uncle's steps, and eventually plunged Europe into the present disastrous War. Thence, we infer that the ungodly man is no freeman. He cannot call his will his own. Like a captive in fetters, he is led by his ruling passion to say and do what his conscience, judgment, and will must, at times, unitedly condemn. But the Spirit of God in the heart makes the Christian to reduce the powers of his nature into subjection to His will, which will is in loving, hearty, voluntary subjection to God's will, because the Spirit of God influences it. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John viii. 36). Learn the deception of any reliance upon moral rectitude for salvation. Inasmuch as the Holy Ghost is God's appointed Spirit for the effecting of man's

salvation, no less a Spirit will suffice. Hence the impulses and workings of the most upright of men out of Christ can never effect salvation. Should any other than God's Holy Spirit suffice, then the bestowal of His Spirit would be a matter of supererogation, and would be at variance with the wise economy of His rule. Our text teaches us our duty towards the Spirit. We note the—

## II.—THE DUTY OF MAN TOWARD THE HOLY SPIRIT.

First: Negatively—"Quench not." As we intimated before, the precepts of this Epistle were directed to the Church as a Church. We apprehend that the words of our text do not teach us that Christians can, individually, fall from grace; yet we do think that a congregation of godly pious men, enrolled in Christian fellowship may, by contention and misgovernment, be cut up into factions, and such discord result, that the Spirit would withdraw His countenance and blessings, and leanness and spiritual famine follow.

However, letting the doctrine of "Falling from Grace" to be dealt with by others, we will note a few things that tend to quench the Holy Spirit in our hearts. (1.) Burdening ourselves with a large amount of worldly care. We cannot serve God and mammon. The man that maketh haste to get rich probably knows little or nothing of the Spirit's influences. The man who attempts to manage several lucrative concerns can abundantly confirm the Bible teachings, that where our affections are, there will our hearts be also.

Secondly: Positively—We must feed the Heavenly Fire. Fuel: Our bodies. Under the Mosaic dispensation, the fire on the large brazen altar in the Court of the Priests, next the Holy Place in the Temple, was originally, in the first place, lit by fire proceeding from the Shekinah above the Mercy Seat on the Ark in the Holiest of Holies. After that, God having lit the flame, it was the priests' duty to keep the same burning perpetually by the morning and afternoon daily sacrifice of a lamb. We must feed the flame of the Spirit Divinely, lit in our hearts by the daily sacrifice of our life to God (Romans xii. 1.)



“A consecration thus deliberately made, including all our acts, powers, and possessions of body, mind, and estate, made without any reserve, either in objects, time, or place; embracing trial and suffering as well as action; never to be modified, and never to be withdrawn; and which contemplates its fulfilment in Divine, and not in human strength, necessarily brings one into a new relationship with God, of the most intimate, interesting, and effective nature.”—UPHAM (*Hidden Life*, p. 31.)

*Aberdare, Sept. 13th, 1870.*

E. G. PRICE.



*Subject: THE TRANSCENDENT MAJESTY OF CHRIST.*

“Made higher than the heavens.”—Heb. vii. 26.

THE argument of the Apostle in the context is one to show the superiority of our Lord’s priesthood to that of the Levitical. Amongst other things, he states that Christ is “holy,” “harmless,” “undefiled,” “separate from sinners,” and “made higher than the heavens.” In what sense is Christ higher than the heavens?

I. In a MATERIAL sense. The whole Universe is spoken of in the Bible as “the heavens and the earth.” Astronomy shows us that our earth is an insignificant atom, compared with the bulk and splendour of the heavens. There are many heavens, and all crowded with worlds and systems as numerous as sands on ocean’s shore, but Christ is higher than these heavens, higher, as the workman is higher than his work. Is not the painter greater than his painting; the engineer than his machine; the architect than his building; the author than his book? So Christ is higher than the heavens because He created them. “By Him were all things created that are in heaven or on earth,” &c. He can look at the Universe, and feel—I produced you, and I could produce a thousand more, greater than you.

II. In a MORAL sense. The untold myriads of unfallen and

redeemed spirits that populate those heavens are very good, very affluent in holy thoughts and Divine aspirations; but Christ, in goodness, is higher than them all. (1.) Their goodness is *derived*. What they have they have received, and they ascribe it to the Great Original. Christ's goodness is original—His is the primal fount whence theirs flow—His, the Sun whence their radiance beams. (2.) Their goodness is *measurable*. It has its measurable limits: His is infinite—a sea without a bottom or a shore. The Spirit is not “given to Him by measure.” (3.) Their goodness is *contingent*. They are fallible, their continuance in goodness is not an absolute certainty, their moral failure is possible. Christ's goodness is absolute. He is good by the constitution of His being. He is, therefore, “higher than the heavens” in a moral sense.

III. In a POSITIONAL sense. Holy Spirits, we are given to understand, exist in vast gradations of order, grade above grade, rank above rank, but Christ is above all. “He is exalted *far* above *all* heavens.” He is in the midst of the throne. He is to all what the Sun is to the planets—the centre round which they all revolve, and from which they all derive their life, strength, beauty, radiance, and joy.

It is impossible carefully and candidly to study the biography of Christ, and the influence He has exerted upon the ages, without being impressed with His *transcendent majesty*. The words of the first Napoleon will ever meet the hearty response of every genuine student of Christ's remarkable history: “Everything in Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and His will confounds me. His ideas and His sentiments, the truths which He announces, His manner of convincing, are not explained, either by human observation, or the nature of things. His birth and the history of His life, the profundity of His doctrine, which grapples the mightiest difficulties, and which is, of those difficulties, the most admirable solution. His Gospel: His apparition: His empire: His march across the ages and the realms—everything is for me a prodigy, a mystery insoluble, which plunges me into a reverie from

which I cannot escape—a mystery which is there before my eyes, a mystery which I can neither deny nor explain. Here I see nothing human. The nearer I approach, the more carefully I examine everything that is above me. Everything remains grand, of a grandeur which overpowers. His religion is a revelation from an intelligence which certainly is not that of man.”



## The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

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The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbosities; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

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No. XI.—ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

*Subject:* THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST.

“But we preach Christ crucified.”—1 Cor. i. 23.

I. CONSIDER THAT CHRIST’S SUFFERING WAS MOST BITTER AND PAINFUL. We may easily imagine what acerbity of pain must have been endured by our Lord, in His tender limbs being stretched forth, racked, and tentored, and continuing a good time in such a posture; by the “piercing His hands and feet,” parts exquisitely sensible, with sharp nails (so that, as it is said of Joseph, the iron entered into his soul), by abiding exposed to the injuries of sun scorching, wind beating upon, weather searching His grievous wounds and sores.

II. CONSIDER CHRIST’S SUFFERINGS AS MOST VILE AND SHAMEFUL, being proper to the basest condition of the worst men, and “unworthy (as Lactantius saith) of a freeman, however innocent or guilty.” It was servile supplicience, a punishment never by the Romans, under whose law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon freemen, but only upon slaves. Thus did our Saviour “endure the cross, despising the shame;” despising the shame, that is, not simply disregarding or dis-

esteeming it as no evil, with a stoical haughtiness, or cynical immodesty, but not eschewing it, or not valuing it as so great an evil that for declining it He would neglect the prosecution of His great and glorious designs. There is in man's nature an aversion and abhorrency from disgraceful abuse no less strong than are the like antipathies to pain; whence, "cruel mockings and scourgings" we find coupled together as ingredients of the sore persecutions sustained by God's faithful martyrs. Our Saviour most evidently discerned the justice of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man, most truly, most fully, most strongly represented to His imagination and spirit. He most firmly believed, yea, most certainly knew, all that God's law had declared about them. He thoroughly did consider and weigh them; His heart was most soft and sensible; His affections were most quick, and easily excited by their due objects; He was full of dutiful love to God His Father, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will towards us; whence it is not marvellous that as a man, as a transcendently good man, He was so vehemently affected by those occurrences, that His imagination was so troubled, and His affections so mightily stirred by them, so that He thence truly did suffer in a manner and to a degree inconceivable, according to that ejaculation in the Greek liturgies—"By Thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us."

III. CONSIDER THAT CHRIST'S SUFFERING ON THE CROSS HAD IN IT SOME PARTICULAR ADVANTAGES CONDUCTING TO THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF OUR LORD'S PRINCIPAL DESIGN.

First: *Its being very notorious and lasting a competent time.* For if He had been privately made away, or suddenly despatched, no such great notice would have been taken of it, nor would the matter of fact itself have been so fully proved to the confirmation of our faith and conviction of infidelity; nor had that His excellent deportment under such bitter affliction so illustriously shone forth; wherefore Divine Providence did so manage the business, that as the course of His life, so also the manner of

His death should be most conspicuous and remarkable. "These things (as St. Paul told King Agrippa) were not done in a corner." And "I (said our Lord Himself) spake freely to the world, and in secret have I done nothing." So were the proceedings of His life not close or claucular, but frank and open; not presently linshed up, but carried on leisurely in the face of the world, that men might have the advantage to observe and examine them. And as He lived, so He died, most publicly and visibly, the world being witness of His death, and so prepared to believe His resurrection, and thence ready to embrace His doctrine, according to what He did Himself foretell, "I, being lifted up from the earth, shall draw all men unto Me." He drew all men by so remarkable a death to take notice of it.

Second: *By this kind of suffering the nature of that Kingdom which He intended to erect was evidently signified.* A kingdom purely spiritual, heavenly, eternal, consisting in the government of men's hearts and spirits, no other kingdom could He be presumed to design, who submitted to this dolorous and disgraceful way of suffering; no other exploits could He pretend to achieve by expiring on a cross; no other way could He govern, who gave Himself up to be mangled by the will of His enemies; no other benefits would that forlorn case allow Him to dispense; so that well might He then assert, "My Kingdom is not of this world," when He was going in this signal manner to demonstrate that great truth.

Third: *By such a death God's special Providence was discovered, and His glory illustrated in the propagation of the Gospel.* Thereby "the excellency" of Divine power and wisdom was much glorified: by so impotent, so implausible, and improbable means, accomplishing so great effects, subduing the world to His obedience, not by the active valour of an illustrious hero, but through the patient submission of a poor, abused, and oppressed person, restoring mankind to life by the death of a crucified Saviour.

Fourth: *This kind of suffering to the devout fathers did seem in many ways significant, or full of instructive and admonitive*



*emblems.* (a) *His posture on the cross* might represent unto us that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in His heart toward us, stretching forth His arms of kindness, pity, and mercy, with them, as it were, to embrace the world. (β) *His ascent to the cross* might set forth His discharging that high office of universal High Priest for all ages and all people, the cross being an altar. O the fallacy of human sense! O the vanity of carnal judgment! nothing ever was more auspicious or more happy than this event, which had so dismal an aspect, and provoked so contemptuous scorn in some, so grievous pity in others. How impotent is wickedness, which is never more thoroughly ruined than by its own greatest success! for by thus striving to debase our Lord, they most highly did advance Him; by thus crossing our salvation they most effectually did promote it.

IV. CONSIDER THE CORRESPONDENCY OF THIS OUR SAVIOUR'S MANNER OF SUFFERING TO THE ANCIENT PROPHECIES FORETELLING IT, AND THE TYPICAL REPRESENTATIONS FORESHADOWING IT. That most famous, clear, and complete prophecy concerning the passion doth express Him suffering as a malefactor ("He was reckoned among the transgressors"), suffering in a manner very painful ("He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities"), suffering in a most ignominious way ("He was despised and rejected of men, as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief"), which circumstances could scarce so punctually agree to any other kind of suffering, or punishment than used as to this. *See* Psalm xxii., Isaac, Brazen Serpent, Paschal Lamb.

V. CONSIDER OUR LORD'S SUFFERING AS APPLICABLE TO OUR PRACTICE; being most apt to instruct and affect us, admonishing us of our duty, and exciting us to a conscionable performance thereof. No contemplation, indeed, is more fruitful, or more efficacious towards the sanctification of our hearts and lives than this of the cross; for what good affection may not the meditation on it kindle? what virtue may it not breed and cherish in us? (1.) Love. (2.) Gratitude. (3.) Hope. (4.) Obedience. (5.) Penitence. (6.) Fear. (7.) Deterrence

from wilful commission of sin. (8.) Joy in contemplation. (9.) Charity toward our neighbour. (10.) Disregard of this world. (11.) The willing insception and the cheerful sustenance of the cross. Since there be such excellent uses and fruits of the cross borne by our blessed Saviour, we can have no reason to be offended at it or ashamed of it; but with all reason heartily we should approve and humbly adore, as well the deep wisdom of God as all other His glorious attributes illustriously displayed therein, to whom, therefore, as is most due, let us devoutly render all thanks, all praise, and glory.

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.



## Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXIV.

*Subject:* THE SCORNER'S FRUITLESS QUEST OF WISDOM.

"A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth."—Prov. xiv. 6.

**A** SCORNER seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not." Presumably because of his scornful spirit. He institutes his search on a wrong principle. The starting-point of his quest is a mistake, and nothing comes of it. Wisdom is not open to all comers who come from his quarter, and come in his spirit. Wisdom is justified of all her children; but of these he is not one.

Rather is his portion with those who, ever learning, are never able to come to a knowledge of the truth; to a real knowledge of real, vital, saving truth. "A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not; but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth." How can an habitual scorner understand? Sympathy is essential to insight; and between sympathy and scorn there is a great gulf fixed, to cross which is practically beyond the resources of either nature or art.

Discussing the proposition, or, rather, affirming and enforcing it, that the first duty of a poet, who aims at immortality, is to compose for men, as they are men, not as they chance to

be philosophers by trade, or shopkeepers by trade; not as they are individually crotchety or self-contained, but as they are endued with common feelings and susceptibilities. Hartley Coleridge remarks that the duty alleged will be almost always neglected by him who sets out with a despair or a contempt of general sympathy. "He feels that his own mind is not in accord with that of his fellow-creatures; he, therefore, is afraid, not without cause of being unintelligible; for sympathy is the ground of all mutual understanding." As with the poet, so with his critics. Sympathy is the *conditio sine quâ non* of insight. It is by studying Shakspeare in a reverential and admiring spirit, and, as Professor Moir puts it, "bringing the inward light of a warm sympathy and poetic feeling to bear upon his darker passages," that real advance has been made in intelligent Shakspearian criticism. Of Shakspeare himself Mr. Bagehot is writing when he says, that however strong in any poet may be the higher qualities of abstract thought or conceiving fancy, unless he can actually sympathize with those around him, he can never describe those around him. "Any attempt to produce a likeness of what is not really *liked* by the person who is describing it will end in the creation of what may be correct, but is not living—of what may be artistic, but is also artificial." This critic singles out Goethe as eminently wanting in Shakspeare's and Scott's gift of sympathy; describing him as a man of universal culture, who mixed with all classes, but became absorbed in none, and remained the cold artist throughout. Mr. Lewes, on the other hand, representing Goethe as eminently qualified to become the friend of those who held opposite convictions to his own, says of his intimacy with Jung Stilling that, "sympathizing with Stilling, listening to him, and dexterously avoiding any interference with his religious faith, he was not only enabled to be his friend, but also to learn quietly and surely the inner nature of such men." What Canon Kingsley finds wanting in an otherwise satisfactory expositor of the ways of the Mystics is, that the author in question had not respect and trust enough for the men and women of whom he wrote, and was too much inclined to laugh at them, and

treat them *de hacet en bas*; that he trusted too much to his own great power of logical analysis, and was apt to mistake the being able to put a man's thoughts into words for him, for the being really able to understand him. "To understand any man we must have sympathy for him, even affection. No intellectual acuteness, no amount even of mere pity for his errors, will enable us to see the man from within, and put our own souls into the place of his soul."

"The enemies of a religion," says Gibbon in his *Essay on the Study of Literature*, "are never well acquainted with it, because they detest it, and often detest it because they are not acquainted with it." "To attempt," as Mr. Caldwell Roscoe somewhere says, "to grasp in its fulness the real case of your adversary, to pierce to the real ground on which he supports his convictions, to find the elements of truth which are embraced in it, and to follow the edge of that delicate boundary along which it melts into error, is a mode eligible only to a powerful mind, and not a narrow one."

A painting is conceived by the artist in a certain pre-determined order of ideas; and it cannot, argue all sound art critics, be understood at all unless the spectator can get himself into a condition of feeling in sympathy with that of the painter.

The accomplished penman of the voluminous *Causeries de Lundi* professes in one of them, to have always thought and felt, that a critic should go to his author's own ink-stand for the ink wherewith to criticize him. To M. Sainte-Beuve has been assigned, with justice, the rare talent of knowing, in all its bearings, the subject he discusses: he studies it psychologically, so to speak; that is to say, he understands how the particular temper and character of any given writer leads him to regard the theme under reviewal, and he judges him accordingly. "Ordinary critics," this English critic on the great French critic goes on to say, pass sentence upon a work merely from the impression they have derived from it; but M. Sainte-Beuve does more; "he enters into the author's feelings, shares his idiosyncracies, and thus gives him the intense pleasure of knowing that he has found at last

for an Aristarchus, a man who has taken the trouble of studying him accurately and patiently."

Of Professor Max Müller, again, it has been said, that, although never shrinking from showing that he has distinct convictions of his own, no man was ever further from misrepresenting or depreciating any other system; that he does full justice to everything that is good and true in each of the systems which he comes across. "Indeed, he does more than justice to it. He evidently takes a hearty delight in tracing out the original elements of truth in each system, and showing how later changes commonly corrupted them. This is the spirit in which all theologians should approach all theological questions; but it is exactly the spirit in which they hardly ever are approached." It is affirmed to be the task of a man who really wishes to know the truth for himself, and truly to judge his neighbours, to penetrate beneath that outward mask which words throw over thought, and to discern the identity which lies hid below. "He must assume, even when appearances seem most to contradict it, that he is not alien from those who most deeply offend him. There is a fundamental rationality in man; and though it is hard, amid the confused skein of words, to disentangle that which is the clue to the whole, . . . yet the endeavour must be persistently made." This sympathy with men, which, as a masterly essayist on Independence of Thought shows to be so valuable, —this identification of ourselves with others, and "abnegation of our own individuality in favour of the common spirit of mankind," is truly said to be not attainable by logical power, though logical power may be a great aid towards perfecting it. It is shown to be far more closely allied to the imagination; and, "like all imaginative excellence, it demands, as its condition, tenderness, delicacy, and the absence of self-sufficiency."

Cowper writes of the treatment of Henry and Edmund in his great contemporary's *Lives of the Poets*:—"I admire Johnson as a man of great erudition and sense, but when he sets himself up for a judge of writers upon the subject of love, a passion which, I suppose, he never felt in his life, he might as



well think himself qualified to pronounce upon a treatise on horsemanship, or the art of fortification."

It has been said of one of the most recent, and certainly not the least capable or least distinguished, of the many biographers of Columbus, that he is wanting in precisely that sympathy which is required for the understanding of the class of men of whom Columbus is one. As a signal instance of the biographic results which follow from any attempt to sketch such characters without the sympathy in question, George Fox is singled out for distinctive mention, the portrait of him by Lord Macaulay being designated "a simple caricature," which only leaves its victim more unintelligible than he was before. "We quite see why those parish constables should have dieted this noisy brawler in leathern breeches on bread and water; but Lord Macaulay does not help us to see just the one point which we wanted to see—Why this noisy ranter became the spiritual regenerator of his time, and how it was that men like Penn and Barclay licked all this "portentous nonsense" into shape. Michelet's treatment of Joan of Arc, on the other hand, is cited as one of the finest instances which history has ever given us of the force of poetic sympathy in rendering a very peculiar character intelligible." By the sheer insight which faith in a great nature alone can give, the historian shows the oneness of that life of a peasant girl as it grew through vision and effort, through its strange alternations of poetry and prose, into the life of a great national deliverer." Canon Kingsley declares the historian's success to depend on his dramatic faculty, which is not logical merely, but moral, and depends on the moral health, the wideness and heartiness of his moral sympathies, by which he can put himself into the place of each and every character, and not merely feel for them, but feel with them.

"Is it," asks George Morley, "through experience that we learn to read the human heart, or is it through sympathy? If it be experience, what becomes of the poet? If the poet be born, not made, is it not because he was born to sympathize with what he has never experienced?"

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

# The Preacher's Dissecting Room.

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"I SPEAK AS TO WISE MEN."

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No. XI.

T. BINNEY.

"**I**F you are going to read Binney, read his sermon on 'Salvation by Fire, and Salvation in Fulness;' they are all very good; but that is the best of the lot." So said a critical friend, on whose judgment and fairness we placed great reliance, as we betook ourselves, armed with the volume,\* to a shady seat in a wood. We opened the book accordingly at page 128, where the sermon begins, and carefully read the fifty-four pages of which it consists—not all, however, at one breath, but in successive detachments, as it were, with corresponding intervals of ponderment and reflection. And this, indeed, may be put down at once as one characteristic of this sermon, and, we doubt not, of all the rest to be found in this volume, and of all Mr. Binney's productions as a preacher, that they move the reader to these occasional pauses as though to give time to the thoughts presented to him to sink down in his mind. Many of the expressions and illustrations employed in this sermon, and (what is still more worthy of remark) many of the Scriptural passages quoted or referred to, will be found to have this effect. We look on this characteristic as one involving very great praise, and as one to which, so far as our experience goes, only masters in the art of preaching are found to attain. An eminent example of it was the late Robert Hall, a man to whom critics of all descriptions have been willing to assign one of the very highest places amongst the ranks of great preachers. Certainly, to employ the language of the historian of King David's reign, he would be one of "the first three" in this kingdom. Accordingly, there are passages of Scripture handled or referred to by him in some of his sermons, and read there by us long ago, which connect themselves to this day in our minds with those sermons and his name. This would seem to be as near an approach as is now permissible to veritable inspiration itself—to inspiration in its most sacred sense—thus to per-

\* *Sermons Preached in the King's Weigh-House Chapel, London.* 1829—1869. By T. Binney. London: Macmillan and Co., 1869.

form a strain of music sent down from above. There are certain gifted vocalists who almost seem to appropriate some of the songs they take up, insomuch that we always say afterwards, "That was So-and-So's song;" and, though we know, of course, that the music was in reality the creation of another, we always connect it with his name, because he succeeded so peculiarly in creating in us a due appreciation of its beauty. He who does thus by the songs of heaven is travelling on a higher line, and is even a greater artist in his way.

This will easily appear, by considering briefly the peculiar difficulty of his task. Partly through the natural inaptitude of men's minds for spiritual truths and impressions, and partly through the habits indulged in by inferior preachers of repeating passages of Scripture without explanation, and as a mere stop-gap in the interrupted and broken flow of their thoughts, it is a melancholy but undoubted truth that there are few things, as a matter of fact, which produce less impression on our minds at times than the quotation of a text. Just in proportion as it ought to do more than other words, in that exact proportion it does less. Its sinking power in the soul is in inverse proportion to its weight. And this, moreover, is a state of things which has a natural tendency to grow worse. Once let the mind begin the process of hardening under any particular influence, and the repetition of the influence, it is evident will only cause it to harden more. We have only to look at men's faces sometimes as they listen to certain familiar and well-worn citations from the Bible—we have only to call to mind our own utter impassiveness at times under the sound of Holy Scripture—to feel the experimental truth of all this. If we had heard something in an altogether unknown language, it might have produced more effect; for there would have been, at least, an arousing of curiosity and of a wish to understand in that case. Whereas, in the case to which we are now referring, practically there was only the effect of a kind of centrifugal force—something driving the thoughts contrary to the circumference, and so away from itself.

Hence, as we have said, the extreme difficulty of the problem to be solved. How are we to revive in one of these venerable quotations the power which (*quoad* us) it has lost? Rather, perhaps, how are we so to employ it as to revive in those who hear it the sensibility which they have lost? The whole thing may be compared, as some have done, to the ringing of a bell. When we heard it at first, long ago, we thought that the ringing sound was for us, and we started up

accordingly as though to open the door; but, somehow, the ringing ceased, or some other sound attracted our attention; and so the door was left shut. The next time that the bell sounded we did not move from our seats, nothing having come of it on the first occasion. And so on from time to time, with less and less interest on each occasion, until now it has become almost as though it were not, or as though it were merely like the ringing of a bell by some one calling next door. The thing, therefore, required now is to make it so sound that it shall seem a new bell—a bell meant for our ears and not for those of another—and conveying a special message to our hearts. Anyone can see the difficulty of such an undertaking. It is not merely to produce an impression on our unimpressible substance. It is to restore the impressibility by the same agency which has been already so employed as to destroy it.

But if the enterprise be thus peculiarly difficult, it is correspondingly important. For the one element in preaching which makes it effective—the one thing in it, as we have remarked before now, which causes it to do the saving, convincing, converting work for which it is intended—is the Scriptural truth it contains. The other ingredients are as the carbon and sulphur in gunpowder, mere vehicles for bringing into action the explosive force of the nitre. The real active dominating ingredient, that without which any amount and brilliancy of preaching would be only like gunpowder without the power of exploding, is that very thing which has become so impotent—viz., the too-familiar sound of the text. It is that very word, in short, which has become so ineffectual on which the whole effect hangs. Our only hope is wrapt up in it, all hopeless as it seems.

How to achieve this impossible task (for with God all things are possible) is a secret which it has pleased Him to reserve in His own hands in great measure. Certain it appears to be, that only those who recognise the inadequacy of all mere human effort and talent to accomplish it, and who, therefore, place their prayerful and cordial dependence on the arm of Supreme Omnipotence, can really hope to succeed. A preacher, who believes himself to be “sufficient of himself” for these things, may succeed, indeed, as described in this very sermon, in building up wood, hay, and stubble, and that possibly on the right foundation (though far more probably on some wrong one), but that will be, except by a miracle, the upper boundary of his achievement. The real abiding work of the preacher will be far above his highest reach. Never will such an one be able to raise again the buried power of the

Scripture. Human indifference and hardness will prove too much for his merely human skill and energy, however unusual; neither will that tremendous power, which lies like a sleeping giant under the surface of Holy Scripture, listen to his merely human enchantments, and awake from its slumbers. Only the God of Scripture and of the heart can cause the first to do its work on the second. Only He who made the salt at first can restore the savour it has lost.

And herein, we believe, is, in fact, one principal reason of the characteristic we have adverted to in this sermon. The preacher has evident confidence in the instrument he employs. He, himself, believes heartily in the Bible as God's Word, and he is not afraid, therefore, of following its guidance in any case to the full—not even where it appears to be leading him to possible contradictions and collisions, and to the very verge of sentiments and opinions which will cause some who hear him to whisper, "Is he sound?" Further, in the very same principle of unswerving loyalty to the supremacy of Holy Scripture, and of unfailing confidence in its constant depth of meaning and perpetual accuracy of definition; he probes and examines and weighs every separate word and shade—a transition which belongs to the various passages which come before him in his path. Nothing Scriptural, it is continually evident, is unimportant in his eyes; if there is an apparent repetition in any case, he takes for granted that it is only apparent, and therefore, as being such, only an additional call for inquiry; if the order of statement is something different from that which natural judgment would have looked for, natural judgment is at once regarded as being in error on the subject, and the nature and extent of the error investigated on the spot. In all points and on every hand the preacher manifests throughout his thorough honour for the "Word," and so his own entire dependence on that Divine Hand which bestowed it. We believe that that same Hand, in return, has honoured his exposition of that "Word," and has caused it to become, thus employed, a living energy on the heart; and we believe that the same kind of honour is within reach of us all. An earnest patient prayerful endeavour—an endeavour to discover and explain what the Scripture says to our minds, and not, as is the case with very many, to find our own minds in the Scriptures—cannot be "in vain in the Lord." If we employ that which He has given us in dependence on His strength, it concerns His own glory to make it of good effect. If it has no life and power in such a case, in what other case can it have them? and if it never has power and life, how can it in any case be Divine? It would almost be as



though Lazarus in his sepulchre had not responded to Christ's call. Who, in such a case, could have believed in that Galilean as "the resurrection and the life?"

Illustrations of the spirit of confidence and dependence to which we refer—of confidence in the inexhaustible fertility of the soil of the Bible when cultivated as it should be, and of dependence, therefore, on the creative Hand which gave that soil and prepared it—are abundant in this sermon. The exposition contained in the first part, in which "salvation by fire" is explained from a consideration of that part of 1 Cor. iii., which is more immediately connected with the words, "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire"—is a case quite in point; but what has impressed us, perhaps, even more is the explanation of "Salvation in Fulness" in the second portion of the discourse. This is founded on the words of St. Peter: "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. . . . For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." In the exposition of this passage, the meaning of virtue, as ἀρετή, or active energy in doing work for Christ, as something distinguished, therefore, from the contemplative and almost passive character of "faith" or devotion, and necessary to be added to it, is first brought out with much care. Then the contrasted and complimentary graces of temperance and patience—that is, of self-control in the enjoyment of pleasure, and of self-sacrifice in the endurance of suffering, are thoroughly examined and set forth; after which it is shown how the Apostle, as though tacitly (though not certainly consciously), to guard against a mere philosophical and stoical exercise of these excellences of temperance and patience, adds that which, except for such an object, would appear entirely out of its place, viz., the mention of godliness too. The next and two concluding graces referred to, and the transitions of thought that lead to them, and between them, and from them, are treated with equal penetration and care. Thus, from the mention of "godliness" or reference to God in all things, it is shown to be a simple and natural passage to make mention of the correlative excellence of "brotherly kindness"—that is, of perpetual love to God's people as our brethren in Him. And, finally, from the mention of love to God's people, it is shown to be easy and proper to conclude by pointing to that wider love described here as "charity," and which embraces

the whole of mankind. This is a bare outline, of course, of a copious—of a very copious—exegesis; it is but, as it were, a bare skeleton of a moving and living organism, every shape, and colour, and form, and movement of which requires considering, if we would appreciate at their full value its charming symmetry and beauty; but even this bare outline, this fleshless skeleton, may serve, perhaps, to give some kind of idea of the characteristic we have in view. But it will, perhaps, assist this idea in some measure, and form a fitting close to all we propose to say respecting this sermon in the present article, if we append the first part of the writer's own summing-up of the exposition in question. He writes thus:—

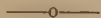
"Such is the evidence which every individual Christian, as a wise, diligent, and honest workman is to build up on the 'foundation' of his 'faith.' It is wonderfully comprehensive, and exquisitely beautiful, this enumeration of virtues—this catalogue of the materials, which, being put together according to rule, shall stand forth a noble, symmetrical, Divine thing—a thing, so to speak, that shall seem a fitting abode for a heavenly inhabitant, the bearing embodiment of a Divine life. The series, we will observe, begins with 'faith,' and ends with 'love;' it thus touches, at one extremity, all that is revealed of God and of the infinite; and on the other, all that belongs to the world and man; while between the two are placed in their order whatever can be required for practical goodness—for the various utterances of a manifold virtue;—for the personal and the relative, the active and the passive, the Divine and the human. These, then, are 'the gold, silver, and precious stones' with which Christians are to construct what they build on their faith in the form of *character*. There is nothing of 'wood, hay, and stubble'—chaff and refuse—here. Hence you are prepared for the further announcement, that in the end there will be nothing about those who thus build, of 'salvation BY FIRE.' Salvation by fire! Salvation with difficulty! Salvation after something like terror and tears! No: '*if ye do these things ye shall never fall*; for SO AN ENTRANCE SHALL BE MINISTERED TO YOU ABUNDANTLY into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' The 'add' in the fifth verse, and 'ministered' in the eleventh, are both parts of the same verb; as if it were said, 'add' to your faith these virtues in this world, and God will 'add' to them—or, to you because of them—'an abundant entrance' into that which is to come; or, as the word has an allusion to the joining together, and the leading up, in majestic order and beautiful harmony of those who constitute a chorus or dance, the idea expressed might be thus rendered: Be careful to cultivate and display, and to lead forth, as with constant gladness, in harmonious order, in all their heavenly grace and beauty, those virtues that are to attend upon and adorn a religious life; and, at the close of thy course, thou shalt be met by an angelic choir, who shall hail thy approach to the Divine land with ready gratulation, who shall gather about thee as an attendant company of heavenly forms; while all those that surrounded thee on earth (the Christian graces) shall go with thee—a radiant train of glorious associates. Thus shalt thou 'enter into the joy of thy Lord'—with choral symphonies and solemn pomp—as one whom HE shall 'delight to honour.'"

Here, for the present, we leave the subject; but not, we

hope, before the reader has discovered that he has almost forgotten the preacher in the words of St. Peter, and that he has looked through the words of St. Peter, to the truth, and wisdom, and inspiration that shines out behind them. The preacher who has effected this has done his work well.

MATHEMATICUS, M.A.

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## Sketches from Genesis.

“The purchased grave.”—Gen. xxiii.

WE shall look upon the purchase of the field of Machpelah in three aspects.

I. In its connection with Sarah, it is a token of respect to the dead.

There are two extremes with regard to the body after the soul has taken its departure. Some are paying it too great a homage; so much so, that it becomes a superstitious, if not an idolatrous act. Others, in their anxiety to avoid that extreme, run into the other; they treat the dead with that disrespect and indecency which becomes repulsive to the mind. Abraham, after the first outbreak of grief, sought a place where the remains of his beloved wife should rest undisturbed; thus paying respect to the dead.

The body deserves this.

1. Because it has been the man's dwelling-place.

To the human mind there is a sacredness belonging to certain places and things. To the Jew, the temple at Jerusalem was a sacred place: the Divine presence made it so. One of the saddest scenes witnessed by man was the razing of that sacred edifice to the ground, not so much on account of its architectural beauty—that was great—but because it was once the dwelling-place of the Most High on the earth. The body is wonderfully and fearfully made; however we would pay our homage to it not so much on account of its build as to the fact of its being the mansion where the soul lies—that being stamped with the Divine image, and, in many cases, filled with the Spirit of the Eternal God. Christianity urges the duty of providing for the wants of the body, of shielding it from danger, and of ensuring its welfare when alive, and whispers a wish for its decent burial when the “vital spark” has fled.

2. Because it has assisted the soul to express itself.

Abraham could no longer behold his wife's love in that once radiant and lovely face. The tongue that used to express the soul's sympathy and love, which had cheered him so often, was now silent in death. Nevertheless, the lifeless frame was dear to his heart, and Machpelah is provided for its resting-place. All we can know of the man is through the body. The words and actions reveal the man; the body is his amanuensis, writing his history to the coming generations, if there be anything worth recording. True, at times the servant is unable to obey the behests of its master—the soul striking itself, as it were, against the walls of its earthly tenement, seeking a wider sphere of action, and a broader outlet, whereby it may express itself the clearer and more powerful. However, all we *can* get is through the instrumentality of the body. We are indebted to it for the soul-expressions of those good and holy men who have been here before us, who removed many thorns from the path we have to tread. Let us, therefore, treat our bodies with care and attention, that the soul may be the more able to make its impress on the world; and when this ready servant dies, may the silent tears of loving friends fall gently on its grave.

3. Because it is destined for a higher and nobler service.

Whether Abraham had any clear and definite conception of the future world, this action appears to me as indicating that he was not entirely without hope of seeing that body again. We are ignorant of the change in the body when raised from the dead; we are certain that it is to be spiritual, incorruptible, and immortal. At present we can form no conception of a spiritual *body*, still we are to believe that after the resurrection we are to inherit the *same* bodies, only spiritualized. Be kind to them, lest they should have real cause to blame you at the judgment-day. When considering they are to serve God for ever in a perfect, cloudless and holy sphere, there is a halo of glory around them, even when lifeless, to justify us in providing a Machpelah for their temporal resting-place.

II. The purchased grave, in its connection with Abraham himself, shows that he prepared for death.

1. It taught him that the highest earthly possessions terminate in a grave.

Paul, when speaking of the Patriarchs, says—"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims



on the earth." The only possession Abraham had in Canaan was a cemetery, and that was purchased of Ephron: his possessions were in another country, the earthly would soon vanish from his sight, they would terminate in that grave. All the wealth and splendour of this world are reduced to very narrow limits by death—a grave is the last earthly inheritance that comes to man's lot, and the last he has to surrender; at the resurrection, the last particle of earth shall be shaken away—the grave left, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

2. It implies that he waited for death.

When buying the field and the cave, he thought of the time when *his* remains would be deposited by the side of his departed wife; he had only to wait a little, and the same messenger would come to call him home. The Christian alone can *wait* for death; to the ungodly it is an enemy from whose presence he endeavours to flee. We are to expect and wait for death, not simply because it terminates the woes, trials, and temptations of life, but because it gives greater freedom to our faculties, so that we may serve God more perfectly than we can do here. Christ has made a present of death to His disciples. Death is the carriage in which they take their departure from their country seat for the town residence of their heavenly Father.

III. The purchased grave, in its connection with the Jewish nation, serves as a monument for their instruction.

1. Its *purchase* taught them that it would soon be *theirs*.

Whilst in life and health *they*, like all the rest of the human family, were liable to forget the hour of death; their father did all he could to remind them of it, by leaving this field as a legacy for them—a strange gift this, of a father to his children! but the best, perhaps, after all.

2. Its stillness taught them to be active.

When visiting that sacred spot, they would find those who had manifested their faith in heroic and glorious deeds now silent and still: their stillness preached activity. The children of Abraham had duties; the time to perform them was short, therefore all their energies ought to be employed before death came. The same lesson is taught us, if we wish to be able to say, in the hour of death, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." There is no time to be lost; the whole being must be concentrated in the work.

3. Its solemnity taught them to seek that country where there is no grave.

Canaan, the land that flowed with milk and honey, had its



Machpelahs. The institutions of death remind us that earth is only a temporary residence. Let us engage in the duties of life with energy, and drink of the spirit of Christ, that we may be ready to enter that country where all the inhabitants are free from the fear of death. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death," &c.

CYMRO.

*Uckfield.*

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

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### AUTUMN VOICES.

"We all do fade as a leaf."—Isaiah  
lxiv. 6.

THERE are voices in nature which demand our attention, and if we will only listen to the words they utter we cannot fail to receive lessons of the very highest importance. As the seasons come and go, we see in them emblems of human life. There is the spring with its vernal hues and bursting buds, illustrative of youth, when life seems bright and beautiful, and when hope sits expectant on the brow. There is summer, when the bud is gone, and the blushing flower blooms in all its native loveliness—when the year seems to pause and sport itself in the fulness of its strength, defying the approach of cold, and frost, and snow. And so youth almost imperceptibly merges into manhood's prime, and then old age and death seem far away. But after summer how soon the autumn comes, and

how speedily the winter follows that; and so do increasing infirmities warn men that they are daily nearing the end of life's journey—that soon they will be carried "to their long home, and the mourners will go about the streets."

The text is emblematic of this autumn season. Everywhere around us we see remnants of the summer glories. Withered grass, dead flowers, and fading leaves, all tell us that the summer has passed away, and that in a little time winter, with its coldness, gloom, and death, will come.

### LESSONS:—

I. Autumn is a time of *failing*. The days grow shorter, and the heat of the sun fails. The flowers hang their drooping heads, and one by one their scentless leaves fall upon the ground; and the foliage of every shrub and tree that once rustled its glad welcome to the summer breeze hangs dying upon the parent stem.

And so with some of you. The spring and summer of your life are gone; and the thought must at times come even to the most thoughtless, This is my life's autumn time, and I am fading like the leaves. Yes, fading! What means that wrinkled and furrowed brow? What mean those whitening hairs? What means that failing strength? What mean the darkening sight, the heavy ear, and feeble walk? It all means that nature has almost worn herself out, and that soon the grave will claim its own, for "from the dust wast thou taken, and unto dust shalt thou return."

II. Autumn is a time of *retrospection*. It is in the autumn that we pause to look back upon the work of the past season, and examine minutely the debtor *per contra* creditor pages of the cash-book, to see whether or not we are in a position to meet the demands of another season. Apply this by asking those in the autumn of life to examine themselves, and see how they have worked for it—to open the great spiritual cash-book and see how the balance stands.

III. Autumn should be a time of *fruition*. It is now that the farmer carries home his golden grain, and the fruits of the earth are gathered in for the good of man. And so it should be with all Christian workers. You should be enabled to look back, and then

raise your "Ebenezer"—you should be able to look round upon the many souls you have been instrumental in bringing to the Saviour's cross, and each say with joy, "Lord, here am I, and those whom thou hast given."

IV. Autumn is a time of *preparation*. Not only do we prepare for the sterile winter, which we know is coming fast upon us, but for the spring-tide too. It is now that the germ is implanted which will yield a hundredfold at no distant time; and if we are spared a few months longer we shall have special cause for thankfulness because of this autumn preparation.

And so should you who are in your life's autumn prepare not only for death, but for that which is beyond—the heaven of eternal rest, where the inhabitants never sicken and die, and where the leaves of the Tree of Life are ever green—for in proportion to your preparedness for heaven will your joy be when you meet your Lord.

Anticipate, then, the blessedness and peace of that land where "everlasting spring abides"—that land of "never withering flowers," where the soul, re-clothed in the glorious resurrection body, will rejoice for ever in the unchanging beauty of angelic youth—where no decline is known, and where "there shall be no more death."

London. A. F. BARFIELD.

### THE ENDEARING ASPECTS OF THE ETERNAL.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."  
—2 Cor. i. 3-4.

THE absolute God lies beyond the ken and comprehension of the creature; it is the glory of the Bible that it brings Him down to us into the sphere of our intelligence and experience. It presents Him in a personality, and therefore makes Him compassable in His relations, and thus makes Him appreciable and dear to us. The text is an example. He is here presented,

I. AS THE FATHER OF CHRIST  
"The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Son's resemblance is an essential fact in the relation of father and son: like begets like, the universe through. Looking at Christ, the Son representing the Father, we get—

First: The *Personality* of God. Christ was a Person. He moved amongst men as essentially distinct from all other objects and personalities. The Father is eternally distinct from the universe.

Secondly: The *Almightiness* of God. The Son was not merely mighty, but almighty. The effect which He produced over the material and the mental domains while here

shows this. The Father is Omnipotent.

Thirdly: The *holiness* of God. "Christ was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." The "Father is light," &c. "He is glorious in holiness," &c.

Fourthly: The *philanthropy* of God. Christ loved mankind, assumed their nature, gave Himself for the world: the Father is full of love for humanity. In Christ, the Son, then, we see the Father, and feel the Father brought near both to our understandings and our hearts.

II. AS THE FOUNTAIN OF MERCIES. He is called the "Father of mercies." This means more than that He confers mercies, or that He confers mercies with a most liberal hand; it means that mercies flow out from His very essence, flow from Him as rays from the ocean, radiate from Him as beams from the sun. The vast contrivances are the *effects* of His wisdom; terrible retributions are the *effects* of His justice; majestic achievements are the *effects* of His power; but mercies are His offspring. They issue from Him; they are the gushings of His heart.

III. AS THE GOD OF COMFORT. There is sorrow in the world, a deep, broad, black, ever surging sea of sorrow. The sufferings of man are great upon him. God is the "God of all comfort." He is the Healer—He has all the

*sympathy* and all the *capacity* necessary to comfort the race.

First: *He is the comforter of the good in all their tribulations.*

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation." It does not matter how or what, or why they are, He is equal to the work. "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Secondly: *He comforts the good that they may comfort others.* "That we may be able to comfort them," &c. No man can be a spiritual physician to others who has not himself been a patient cured by God. That man is the only true comforter of his race who has experienced most tribulations, and who has experienced most of the comfort of God.

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#### IDEAL YOUNG MANHOOD.

"I have written unto you young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."—1 John ii. 14.

THESE words indicate to us what young men should be. Young men of this type is the want of the age, the hope of the world. Young men are here represented,

I. AS MORALLY STRONG. Strength of all kinds is a blessing. *Physical* strength is a blessing. Young men should cultivate it; should so cultivate the muscle and the limb as to become athletic. *Mental* strength is a greater blessing. Strength to think, with clearness, freedom: com-

pass strength to struggle after a hidden truth, grasp it completely, bring it forth from its obscurity, and hold it into the light. But *moral* strength—strength of trust in God—strength of pure affection and noble purpose, is the best of all. The physical strength of Samson was good, the mental strength of Solomon was better, the moral strength of such men as Abraham, Paul, and Luther is best of all. Young men are here represented,

II. AS DIVINELY INSPIRED.

"The word of God abideth in you." The "Word of God" is the mind of God, the moral spirit of God; and this must abide in a young man. Abide there—First: As the animating principle. Secondly: As the fashioning power. Thirdly: As the Sovereign Lord. Young men are here represented,

III. AS GLORIOUSLY VICTORIOUS. "Ye have overcome the wicked one." There are many wicked ones on earth, but there is one called "*the* wicked one"—the Devil. To overcome him is the grandest conquest.

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#### THE BRIGHT FUTURE OF THE WORLD.

"In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day

there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." —Zech. xiv. 20, 21.

LOOKING at this passage as a portraiture of the future of the world, we are reminded that *holiness* will be its grand characteristic. There may be, and no doubt there will be, other things, great material and mental prosperity, but holiness will be its salient feature. The holiness will be universal.

I. It will embrace the affairs of COMMON LIFE. "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses." Then there will be no horses employed in war and races, they will be employed for right purposes and in a right way. The men who ride and drive them in state will be holy men, the men who use them in commerce will be holy men, the men who use them in agriculture will be holy men. Horses, which for ages have been unrighteously treated and unrighteously used, in that day will be properly treated and properly employed.

II. It will embrace all DOMESTIC CONCERNS. "Every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts." The idea is that holiness will extend even

to the minutest concerns of domestic life. All the members of families will be religious in everything.

III. It will embrace all RELIGIOUS DOINGS. "The pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar," &c. . . . "and all they that sacrifice," &c.

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#### THE GIFTS OF CHRIST.

"Not as the world giveth, give I unto you." —John xiv. 27.

I. The world gives INFERIOR gifts. Christ gives the highest.

II. The world gives NON-ESSENTIAL gifts. Man can do without the best things that the world can give, he cannot do without Christ's gifts.

III. The world gives SELFISHLY. It looks for something in return, Christ from infinite disinterestedness.

IV. The world gives LIMIT-EDLY. It cannot give much, it has neither the heart nor the capacity. Christ gives unlimitedly. He openeth His liberal hand.

V. The world gives OCCASIONALLY. It is only now and then by moods, Christ gives constantly.

VI. The world gives to ITS FRIENDS. "It loves its own." Christ gives to His enemies.



# Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCLXXXI.)

*Subject:* THE EPICURE; OR, GASTRIC TEMPTATION.

"When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat."—Prov. xxiii. 1-3.

THE temptations to which men are exposed in passing through this life, are many and varied. They meet them in every department of life; they touch them at every susceptibility of their natures. There are the temptations of the market, the temple, the chamber, the field, the library, the table; to the last the text refers.

The great tempter, perhaps, is never more active and successful than at banquets; he gets at the brain, heart, and being of man through his stomach. When he gets the gastric faculty he gets the man. Hence, against no temptation does man require warnings more forceful and frequent, and yet the pulpit is comparatively silent on the point. Where it ought to thunder it is mute.

The text leads us to consider two things concerning this gastric temptation:—its *elements* and *resistance*.

I. ITS ELEMENTS. What constitutes the temptation to go wrong at the table? Two things which are referred to in the passage.

First: *A sumptuous banquet*. "When thou sittest to eat with

a ruler." The scene suggested is the table of a prince bespread with all the luxuries and delicacies calculated to raise the appetite to its highest excitement.

Secondly: *A keen appetite*. "If thou be a man given to appetite." The expression "given to appetite," means something more than being hungry, something more than a craving for mere natural food, it means that craving for "dainties" which has been cultivated by a regaling on delicacies. These two things constitute the temptation; the one without the other would be powerless to tempt. Let the table be covered with the choicest delicacies, if there be no appetite there will be no temptation; and on the other hand, let the appetite be ever so strong, if there be nothing on the table there will be no temptation. The two things coming together, the sumptuous fare and the strong appetite, create the temptation.

These two elements of temptation civilization has wonderfully strengthened, and continues to do so every day. The brute has an appetite, and he takes from the table of nature provisions in their simplest form, but man employs his imagination both upon his food and his appetite. He brings the fruits of nature into new combinations, and thus gives them new and exciting power over his palate; and in this way he

comes into possession of artificial tastes and cravings.

II. ITS RESISTANCE. Here observe two things—the manner and reason.

First: *The manner*. “Put a knife to thy throat.” The idea is, resist with the most resolute determination. So powerful is the temptation which the table exerts on some guests, that if there is to be resistance, it must be with the utmost determination. The whole force of the soul must be exerted. Perhaps, Solomon means to say it is better to cut your throat with the knife than to use it for feeding on the stimulating viands. Better it would be that the body should die than it should be so pampered as to bury the soul in plethora.

Secondly: *The reason*. “Be not desirous of his dainties, for they are deceitful meat.” Those dainties prepared by culinary science are generally deceitful; they promise good, but bring evil both to body and soul. “When you see a number of dishes,” says an expositor, “of different kinds, think with yourself—here are fevers, and agues, and gouts in disguise. Here are snares and traps spread along the table, to catch my soul and draw me into sin. *Sense* gives a good report of this plenty; but *reason* and *religion* tell me to take heed, for it is deceitful meat.” “If I see,” says Bishop Hall, “a dish to please my appetite, I see a serpent in that apple and will please myself in a wilful denial.” The productions of culinary art and confectionary skill are injurious alike to the bodies and souls of men. How much need have we to use the prayer

of the Church of England—“Grant unto us such abstinence, that our flesh being subdued unto the Spirit, we may ever obey the godly motions.” Are not, it may be asked, all these things given for our enjoyment? Are we not justified in seeking pleasure in the fruits of the earth? Our reply is, that our benevolent Creator has so arranged that the food we require should give pleasure to the hungry man, that the appropriation of the aliment into the system it requires, is pleasant to the senses. But this does not justify us in seeking pleasure in them. All bodily appetites should be attended to for purposes of relief, not gratification. The very moment we seek gratification in any organ or appetite of the body, we degrade our nature and dishonour our Creator. Our happiness is not in the body but in the soul, not without but within, and ought never to be sought for as an end; it comes only in self-consecration to duty and to God. The men who make a god of their belly, are for the most part the most wretched in mind and contemptible in character. The epicure drags his soul in the pool of materialism, and buries its wings in mud.

#### (No. CCLXXXII.)

*Subject*: RICHES NOT TO BE LABOURED FOR AS AN END.

“Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.”—Prov. xxiii. 4, 5.

THESE words are to be taken of course in a qualified sense, the sense in which some of the words of our Saviour are to be

accepted. Christ says: "Labour not for the meat that perisheth." Obviously He does not mean that we are not to work for our livelihood; this would be contrary alike to the injunctions of the Bible, the arrangements of nature and the necessities of mankind. He means that we are not to labour solely or chiefly for our temporary wants, but for good of a higher and more enduring kind: "The bread of everlasting life." So the philosopher here means, not that we are to be utterly regardless of worldly wealth and make no efforts for its attainment, but that such must not be our end. The man who despises riches is either a hypocrite or a fool. Wealth is not only a power to aggrandize self, but to bless the world. The annihilation of pauperism, the education of humanity, and the evangelization of the world are greatly dependent on money.

There are two reasons suggested, however, why wealth should not be laboured for as an end.

I. IT IS TO PURSUE YOUR OWN WISDOM. This is implied in the prohibition, "Cease from thine own wisdom." A man's own wisdom, the wisdom he reaches by an intellect under the government of a corrupt and selfish heart, is a false and dangerous light. It leads right away from truth and holiness and God; it is called a "fleshly" wisdom, it is the child and servant of the senses; its science is fleshly; its literature is fleshly; its art is fleshly; its religion is fleshly; it lives in materialism. It is called foolish wisdom; "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." Foolish,

indeed; it prefers the shadow to the substance, the form to the spirit, the transient to the imperishable, the devilish to the Divine.

Now it is this miserable wisdom that inspires man to labour for riches as an end. The wisdom from above directs him to higher wealth, calls upon him to lay up treasures in heaven, "where no moth can corrupt and no thief break in and steal."

II. IT IS TO PURSUE A VERY INFERIOR GOOD. "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings: they fly as an eagle toward heaven." The words here given concerning riches suggest three things.

First: Their *unsubstantial* character. "Upon that *which is not*." Wealth at best is a most unsubstantial thing; it is a mere air bubble rising on the stream of life, glittering for a moment, and then departs for ever. Great fortunes are but bubbles: they vanish before a ripple on the stream, or a gust in the atmosphere. The words suggest—

Secondly: Their *fleeting* character. "They make themselves wings: they fly away as an eagle toward heaven." The fortunes of all men grow wings, some grow them more quickly than others: with some, fortunes are fledged in a night, and in the morning, like an eagle, they are gone—they are vanished from the horizon. How swiftly the wealth of Job fled away (Job i. 14—17). The words suggest—

Thirdly: Their *unworthy* character. They are unworthy of human love. "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?" The "eyes" mean heart. Wilt

thou regard them with avidity and fond desire? If so, what a fool to give the love of an immortal nature to that which is so unsubstantial and fleeting. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."

"Riches, like insects, while conceal'd they lie,  
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly.  
To whom can riches give repute and trust,  
Content or pleasure, but the good and just?  
Judges and senates have been bought for gold:  
Esteem and love were never to be sold."  
POPE.

(No. CCLXXXIII.)

*Subject:* A SPURIOUS HOSPITALITY.

"Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: for as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words."—Prov. xxiii. 6-8.

TRUE hospitality is a social virtue of no ordinary worth. It gives a glow to the social atmosphere, but like all good things it has its counterfeit. There is much spurious hospitality. Much passes for it which in substance is as foreign to it as brass to gold. The text refers to a spurious hospitality.

I. IT IS SORDID. "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye." The "evil eye" here means covetousness; it is a symbol of the penurious, the stingy, the grudging. Strange that lean-natured miserly souls should make feasts, yet they do. Perhaps their banquets are as numerous and magnificent as those whose generous natures are ever a-glow with social love. They do it, however, not for

the happiness of their guests, or the gratification of their own natures, but for ulterior reasons lying in the region of the mean and the selfish. Sometimes *vanity* is the acting motive. To have around their board guests that will flatter and fawn, yields their selfish natures pleasures of a certain kind. Many stingy souls make feasts for men of popularity and fame in order to gratify their own vanity. Simon the Pharisee of old entertained Jesus of Nazareth probably for this reason; he had no sympathy with the Galilean, but the Galilean was becoming famous, and he wished to participate in the renown. Sometimes *greed* is the acting motive. These men make feasts for clients and customers. They often do fine strokes of business at their dinner-table, in the presence of steaming viands and sparkling glasses. They make feasts for matrimonial ends: they invite to their table those whose connubial connexion with their own sons and daughters they regard as an object devoutly to be wished. They make feasts for secretarial ends. How many feasts are made both in the mercantile and religious world in order to gain funds for companies and societies, in which managers and secretaries have a vital interest: these men often make feasts to fill their own pockets at the public expense.

II. IT IS HYPOCRITICAL. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee, but his heart is not with thee." The eye belies the lips; as a host he says one thing and looks another. His words are generous, whilst every mouthful



swallowed by the guest gives him a twinge of fretful regret; all the while he thinks more of his purse than of the pleasure of his guests. The kind, sweet words which he uses at the banquet are succeeded by groans and curses in his heart when you retire. The selfish host is a hypocrite at his table; his words belie his heart.

III. IT IS ABHORRENT. "The morsel which thou hast eaten thou shalt vomit up, and lose thy sweet words." If thou hast insight enough at the time to discern spirits, thou wilt feel an inner disgust for thy host. The discrepancy between the words and heart of the host will disgust thee, the very "morsel which thou hast eaten" thou shalt be ready to "vomit up;" or if at the time the discrepancy is not discovered and felt, it will show itself on some future occasion: he will remind thee of it by some hint or act. He will give thee to understand that that dinner laid thee under some obligation to him which you should practically recognise. He made that dinner, not for the sake of thee, but for the sake of himself, and unless he reaps the anticipated profits out of thee, he will show his displeasure, and this will make thee sick. "The morsel thou hast eaten thou shalt vomit up." That dinner will always be a disgust to thee, notwithstanding all the "sweet words" that were spoken on the occasion, the words of flattery, for his fine dishes and wines, his magnificent style and princely abundance, all such words will be lost words.

CONCLUSION: Avoid then such feasts. "Desire not thou his

dainty meats." Keep away from his table. Paul says: "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."—1 Cor. v. 11.

The covetous man is here classed with the fornicator, the drunkard, the idolater, the extortioner, the railer. Don't sit at the table of a covetous man. Genuine hospitality very soon makes itself manifest wherever it is. "It breaks," says Washington Irving, "through the chills of ceremony and selfishness, and thaws every heart into a flow. There is an emanation from the heart in genuine hospitality which cannot be described, but is immediately felt, and puts the stranger at once at his ease."

#### (No. CCLXXXIV.)

*Subject:* THE INCORRIGIBLE  
SINNER.

"Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words."  
—Prov. xxiii. 9.

WE often speak of retribution as if it always lay beyond the grave, and the day of grace as extending through the whole life of man; but such is not the fact. Retribution begins with many men here, the day of grace terminates with many men here before the day of death. There are those who reach an unconvertible state, their characters are stereotyped and fixed as eternity. The things that belong to their peace are hid from their eyes; they are incorrigible. Such is the character referred to in the



text—"Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words." Who are the incorrigible?

I. They are those who ARE NOT to be taught. Here is a prohibition to teachers. There are certain men they are not to address. Elsewhere Solomon gives the same prohibition, Prov. ix. 8. Our Saviour gives the same injunction: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot, and turn again and rend you."—Matt. vii. 6. There are men whom God has given up teaching. There was Saul: "the Lord answered him not with dreams, or visions, or prophets." He was left to himself, and he went at night to Endor. There was Herod: Christ declined speaking a word to Herod.—Luke xxiii. 9. There are men to whom a wise teacher should not

direct his counsels. Such men are not difficult to recognise; there is a callousness, a profanity, a recklessness, and a scorn which mark them as incorrigible reprobates. Don't speak to them, pass them by with a dignified silence, enter into no discussion with them on sacred themes.

II. They are those who WILL not be taught. "He will despise the wisdom of thy words." A man who despises wise words has not the spirit for learning; the moral soil of his nature is not that which can receive the seed of spiritual wisdom. It is craggy granite, not seasoned loam. The man has no *docility*; he is too proud and haughty to be taught. He has no *reverence*; to him there is nothing greater than himself. His spirit for receiving counsels of wisdom is as foreign as that of the lion or the wolf.



## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

*The Secrecy of Evil.*—Dark deeds are done in secret; drag them into the light, and they cannot stand it. A debased soul, brought into open daylight, and not rushing from it, is naturally purified; that which was darkness in the dark becomes light in the daylight. Therefore, to see God's face is to be pure from every shame. And it is to be elevated above all earthliness. A Russian Empress once built a palace of ice, and her guests danced and banqueted within its glimmering

walls. But when the sun shone it vanished, and melted into cold and dripping mud. Even so it is with the aims men toil for most. Death comes, and all they have longed for looks no better than a palace of icicles, which shone with opal colours under the moonbeams, but melts into hideous ruin before the light of God. Therefore, to see God's face is to distinguish the real from the illusory, the true from the false. And it is to be at peace. For as the chaos became order and beauty under

the wings of the Spirit of God, and as the troubled waves of Galilee sank into calm beneath the Saviour's feet, so there can be no disquietude in His presence, where the "wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

*Light Reached by Effort.*—

Never let the present "solicit us with its easy indulgence to despair of that sweetest and noblest hope." By aiming at it we shall at last attain. So have I stood deep in an Alpine valley, and still wrapped in the cold and darkness far below, have seen the first sunbeam smite with its fierce splendour the highest mountain top, and thought that it must be impossible by any to reach, from our dim, low region, that encrimsoned height; and yet, the sunrise leapt from peak to peak, and flowed and broadened in its golden streams down the mountain side, have climbed on and on with long toil, and under the full daylight have mounted to that topmost crest of eternal snow, heaved high into the regions of blue air. So is it in the moral world. He who ever toils up-hillward, with his eye upon the summit,

"Shall find the toppling crags of duty scaled,  
Are close upon the shining table lands,  
To which our God Himself is moon and sun."

*Science.*—Science does but read aloud the awful lessons of that great open Bible, the universe of God, on which many of you forsooth look down from the whole height of your towering ignorance. In proportion to your knowledge of this Revelation will be your interest in it. He who loves and admires creation, yet knows nothing of its

plan, is like one who stands in a cavern of which the riches and beauty are but dimly seen; but to him who enters it with the torch of knowledge, its dim walls become illuminate with ten thousand glories. Exchange, while you can, a wise knowledge for a feeble and ignorant contempt. Enter it, while you can, with holy and humble hearts, and

"Bid with lifted torch its starry walls  
Sparkle as erst they sparkled to the  
glow  
Of odorous lamp tended by saint and  
sage."

*Literature.*—Books, which are "the true reliquaries of the saints, but without imposture;" books, which with a potent, yet innocent necromancy enable us to evoke from their dim tombs the spirits of the dead; books, which are the best heart's blood of great men, "embalmed for a life beyond a life." My brethren, they are well nigh the richest privilege, and quite the worthiest, the most unshaken and incorruptible friends we can possess. Few of us reverence and value them enough. Ah! when I remember how many good and great books there are, books which a lifetime could not exhaust, books every one of which would make the true reader wiser, better, nobler,—loftier in intellectual stature, and in moral strength, and which yet are left unread—I stand amazed to think of that silent assembly of uncrowned kings which is beckoning to us in vain, while yet you will not ask the philosopher for the gathered treasures of his wisdom, or the orator for the thunder of his eloquence, or the poet for the magic of his song. And for whom will you forsake

them? For the bald and disjointed inanities of personal talk. There, in our library, are many great and precious volumes of wise men's words; and for what will you abandon them? I forbear to characterize fully the literature of which some among you seem fondest, or which I see oftenest in their hand, books which are no books, the nameless outpourings of obscure vulgarity, the raw conceptions of unknown sensationists, the brainless buffoonery which turns even what is noblest into jest. And this prison litera-

ture, this romance of the counter and the stable, this noisy and ignoble trash, can interest and amuse many boys who, as I have long since discovered, barely know the names of the greatest poets, or have heard so much as the titles of the books of their wisest contemporaries. However we view it, such a taste is a calamity, and such a literature a nation's curse. Believe me, in such books you will never see the face of God.

F. W. FARRAR, M.A., F.R.S.,  
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Cambridge.*



## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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NEW CYCLOPÆDIA OF ILLUSTRATIONS, ADAPTED TO CHRISTIAN TEACHING.

By Rev. ELON FOSTER, New York. London: Dickinson and Higham,  
73, Farringdon Street.

"GREAT Works," says Coleridge, "are not in everybody's reach, and though it is better to know them thoroughly than to know them only here and there, yet it is a good work to give a little to those who have neither time nor means to get more. Let every bookworm, when in any fragrant, scarce old tome he discovers a sentence, a story, an illustration, that does his heart good, hasten to give it." The author of this volume has acted upon the philosopher's suggestion, and presented to the public a book containing thousands of extracts from all kinds of authors, ranging from the weakest to the strongest. There is a great rage just now for what are called pulpit illustrations, and we have seen somewhere the stupid expression that "one illustration is worth a thousand abstractions." What is truth to man but an abstraction? and what is the good of an illustration unless it helps to convey the truth? Our knowledge of preachers—which is not the most limited—assures us that those who use

the most illustrations have the least to illustrate. There is one brother, the type of a large class, who spends his week days in collecting a string of telling illustrations for the Sunday. He is very popular, of course, but his sermons are like those painted balloons let off by children, carrying nothing but gas. Some of his people call him the "tickling preacher." Analogies are most deceptive. The sophist can employ them to carry as the truth of God absurdities and blasphemies, to the hearts of his audience. This, we fear, is often done. As a rule, the man who has the power for reaching abstract truth has the faculty for creating necessary illustrations. Most of the extracts here are valuable for their own sake, and they are intended, not for dishonest, but truthful use. Though the author has availed himself somewhat extensively of our productions, we are not "exalted above measure," inasmuch as he has brought us into fellowship with some writers, of whom we have no very elevated opinion, and placed our utterances in close proximity to some very stupid anecdotes and twaddling extracts. What meaneth this? That we disparage the work before us? By no means. It is a priceless volume; it contains thousands of gems capable of flashing a telling light upon sermonic paragraphs. The work shows that the compiler has travelled over an immense field of sacred literature, and plucked many of the choicest flowers therefrom.

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SERMONS ON HISTORICAL SUBJECTS. By REV. D. ROWLANDS, B.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

THIS volume contains eighteen sermons, the subjects of which are: "Jacob's Dream; The Sower and the Seed; The Biography of Enoch; The Penitent Thief; The Burning Bush; Nathaniel under the Fig-tree; Abraham's Intercession; The Temptation of Christ; David and Goliath; The Transfiguration of Christ; Elijah on Mount Carmel; The Apostolic Age; Jacob's Wrestling; Christ before Pilate; The House of Rimmon; The Sons of Zebedee; Amaziah King of Judah; and, The Olympian Race-course." These subjects are amongst the most interesting found in Sacred History. They are here treated in no common-place fashion; each discourse has the freshness of a new life. The author thinks for himself—thinks with clearness, profundity, and force, and presents the results of his thought in language strong and elegant.

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CHRISTUS CONSOLATOR: THE PULPIT IN RELATION TO SOCIAL LIFE. By ALEXANDER MACLEOD, D.D. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

THIS book is divided into two parts. The first part contains discourses on the social mission of the pulpit and the preacher—considered as an Elevator, as a Healer, as a Reconciler, as an Educator, as a Liberator, and as a Regenerator. The second part contains discourses on the results of Preaching, Secrets of Failure, Range of Preaching, Detraction, Preachers, and Sermons. The author writes not only as a man who

understands his subjects, but as one who has strong convictions on the subjects he discourses, and broad sympathies for mankind. The book shows the heart of a philanthropist, and the head of a philosopher. It is a word in season—a forceful, manly word.

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THE THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Rev. J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, D.D. Translated from the Dutch by MAURICE J. EVANS, B.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

THE author's preface will best explain the nature and purpose of this work. "The present handbook owes its origin to the personal need of the writer. Called, *inter alia*, to lecture on the Biblical Theology of the New Testament as a separate branch of theological science, I looked in vain for a manual which should, in all respects, correspond to my wishes. Taking into account the great wealth of the subject, and the limited time which could be devoted by my class to this important theological discipline, I felt impelled as early as possible to set my hand to the work, and to present my students with a book, which should by no means render unnecessary a more complete analysis of the material therein treated of, but should rather incite thereto; and should thus form, in some measure, the basis on which yet further to build. From the nature of the case, therefore, much could be only hinted at which calls for additional oral information; and, on the other hand, as far as possible, all had to be set aside which belongs to the domain of kindred theological science. In the choice, also, of the literature to which the student is referred, I had regard less to completeness than to adaptation, and reserve to myself the right and the duty of adding thereto as occasion may demand. The 'points of inquiry' at the end of each section are designed to serve, not as rigid bonds, but as hints leading to further discussion and interchange of thoughts. I hope in this way to have contributed something, also, towards the 'self-culture' of those who think they can derive some profit from the study of my book. That constant application to Holy Scripture itself must inseparably accompany the use of the handbook, will, at once, be self-evident. Only thus can it call forth a thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures, and prepare the way for the study of Systematic Theology. Should this attempt answer the end in view, it is my intention to issue a similar compendium of Christian Dogmatics, and possibly also of Practical Theology—to both which subjects, no less than to Biblical Theology, I am called to devote my best endeavours. To the former and present members of my class, who have hitherto followed these lectures with interest, and not without profit, these pages bring with them my sincere and heartfelt salutations."

The author having thus indicated the reason and structure of the work, all we have to say is, that his idea is in every way admirably executed.





# A HOMILY

ON

## *Methods of Study in Preparation for the Pulpit.\**

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“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”—2 Tim. ii. 15.

**W**E are to converse this evening, not about methods of study in general, but about methods of study in preparation for the pulpit. The subject, to all preachers, is important, to young preachers may be useful. The preacher's power, if he have any, will reveal itself in the pulpit, and be greatly influenced by his method of preparation. He will labour to have good matter, well put together, and marked by perpetual freshness. To secure either of these excellences, especially to secure them all, he will give himself to the reading which makes a full man, to the writing which makes an exact

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\* This article was read before the associated ministers of Bristol, to introduce a friendly discussion on the subject of which it treats. This will explain the fact that it is short, and consists of simple jottings, which were never intended to go beyond our fraternal conference. It is at the request of the ministers that it is sent to the *Homilist*.

man, and to the conversation or speaking which makes a ready man.

It is easy enough to fill up the canonical hours with talk of some kind; the desirable thing is to talk so as to interest, edify, and impress the hearers; to talk thoughts that breathe in words that burn. Many a minister might truthfully enough be described, as our greatest poet has described Gratiano, as speaking "an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice." His reasons are as two grains of wheat hidden in two bushels of chaff. You shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have found them they are not worth the search. This is pitiable; but a good minister will not run to the opposite extreme, and present his thoughts in too solid a form, but will remember, as Thomas Fuller, in his inimitably quaint way, puts it, that without a fair proportion of chaff the horse is apt to bolt his oats. The Country Parson confesses, towards the close of a pleasant essay, that his many pages could be compressed by Archbishop Whately into a single page; but he comforts himself with the reflection, that for most people it is necessary to have thought diluted. Perhaps it is, but the diluting process may be carried too far.

Many who have no lack of thought in their sermons fail to clothe them with freshness. Their discourses are like Aaron's rod before it budded—orthodox enough in form, smooth enough in style, but dry and dead enough as well. What it is very desirable to secure is, that they shall rather resemble that rod when it brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms and yielded almonds, and so be marked by life, beauty, and richness. The dead level of commonplace in the pulpit creates "the hill difficulty" for those who occupy the pew.

There is a general preparation for the pulpit which, with the true minister, never ceases. He may read many

books, intermeddle with all knowledge, and write for reviews of every kind ; but in all his reading, thinking, and writing he will aim to be more thoroughly furnished for his pulpit ministrations. A man of many books, he is pre-eminently a man of one book ; and whatever increases his acquaintance with the words, the spirit, the meaning of the book, his great text-book, increases his readiness to bring forth from that treasury of heavenly truth "things new and old." A minister may say, I prepared such and such a sermon in so many hours, and men may marvel at the fertility of his mind : in reality he tells only part of the truth ; that sermon is the outgrowth of months, perhaps of years, of thought.

In connexion with this general preparation the minister-student will use an Interleaved Bible, so as to indicate, in connexion with particular texts, root ideas out of which sermons may grow, and where explanations or illustrations, either original or selected, may be found. An Index Rerum does not serve quite the same purpose, but may be used as a valuable auxiliary to the Interleaved Bible. He will find it advantageous to keep a topic-book, containing a list of the great themes, to which, in the course of the year, attention should be called, marking them off as they are treated of. This will help him rightly to divide the Word of Truth, and show him whether he is giving due prominence in his teaching to the different aspects of doctrine, experience, and practice. A text-book will serve an excellent purpose. In his private reading a passage impresses his mind, unfolds its meaning to him, and refreshes him with its fulness, sweetness, beauty ; and before it passes away from his mind he gives it a place in his text-book, and writes, briefly or more at large, the thoughts that cluster around it or grow out of it. Thus he will always have the germs of original sermons ready to his hand, and in an emergency he will only have to turn

to this reserve fund to find what will help him and suit his people. A book for Illustrative Gatherings finds a place and serves a purpose in his method; for whether he is reading his daily paper, or perusing some book of travels, or cultivating acquaintance with some science or art, or walking amid the beauties of nature, or conversing with his people, he comes across some fact, or he sees some phenomenon, or he hears some circumstance full of illustrative power; and at his earliest convenience he puts it among his illustrative gatherings, volumes of which he will collect in the course of years.

In direct, special, immediate preparation for the pulpit, many methods are adopted by many men. The best method for one might be the worst method for another. Here it must be every man in his own order—with this proviso, however, that it is not the lazy, slovenly order. The man who puts off his preparation to the last night, or the last day of the week, and then thinks to serve God on the Sunday with what cost him little or nothing on the week days, may be borne with for a time; but unless he be a man of extraordinary activity of mind and fluency of speech, he will certainly fail—as he deserves to do. If he thinks he can do without study, the people will soon think they can do without him.

The true preacher gives prayer the first place in his reparation. He believes in the Holy Ghost; and, therefore, he prays for the inner light which comes through the indwelling Spirit, who makes the heart right with God, and leads into the knowledge and love of truth. He will take no text or topic without making it a matter of prayer; and having done this, having prayed himself into the very heart of the text, he will be strong in the confidence that he has a message from God to his people. In sober truth, the closet is the best study; the Spirit is the best commentator; prayer is the best handmaid to pulpit

preparation. To pray well is to study well, and to preach well too; for the preacher is himself a great part of the sermon.

Having found his text or topic, he will collect his material, jotting down rapidly such thoughts as may occur to him: then he will map out his plan; and from his hastily penned sketch, he will carefully prepare his sermon, correcting much or little as he may find best suited to his genius. When the general thinking has extended over the earlier days of the week, the final writing of one sermon may be done in a morning or an evening; but when the thinking and writing have to be done in a day, he will do the general thinking in the morning, and the careful writing in the evening.

Some write every word and read it. Except in the hands of men remarkable for the beauty of their thoughts and the excellence of their elocution, the read sermon is unimpressive and unacceptable. There may appear two or three in an age whom we should not wish to see giving up their habit of sermon-reading in the pulpit,—they do it so well, and their thoughts are so grand and beautiful. But as practised by most men, it is like dancing in chains; and that cannot be done with ease and grace.

Others write only a bare outline, or do not write at all. And, provided they give as much time to think out as they would need to write out their discourses, this method may prove most impressive and edifying; but adopted by commonplace men, or men of indolent habits, it will end in the wearisome repetition of a few stock phrases, and stale illustrations. Rowland Hill once said to a young man who was anxious to preach: "Well, the Gospel is a good milch cow; she gives plenty of milk. I never write my sermons; I first give a pull at justification, then a plug at adoption, and then a bit at sanctification; and so one way or another, I fill up my pail with good Gospel



milk." That might do for Rowland Hill, whose genial wit, often nearly allied to absolute coarseness, enabled him to lay hold of the people; but that is a very loose and unedifying method of ministering the truth.

A few of our finest preachers write their sermons with care, and preach them *memoritor*. In this way they secure the correctness of a written discourse, with much of the impressiveness of an extemporary one. But this involves hard work; leaves less time than is necessary for the discharge of the other duties of the ministerial office; and, except in the case of those whose memory is marvelously retentive, interferes with the real enjoyment of the preacher in the delivering of his discourse.

Many find the best method half-way between the fully written and the entirely unwritten plans. They write one-third, one-half, or two-thirds, as the particular nature of the subject may require; they carefully think out the rest; and thus they unite the advantages of careful preparation with those of free speech. In this case, what is written should be *thought in its most condensed form*; and what is added in the delivery should be the amplification of that thought, so as to work it into every mind. Upon the whole, and for ninety-nine out of every hundred, this last commends itself as the best method for the Nonconformist minister who has the work of so many different offices laid upon him, filling his hands and claiming his time.

This was the method of that most remarkable preacher of modern times who, being dead, yet speaks to us in his Life and Letters, and Suggestive Sermons—Robertson of Brighton. Writing to his Bishop in answer to some charge which had been brought against him, he says, "I should say, too, that the word extempore does not exactly describe the way I preach. I first make out copious notes; then draw out a form; afterwards write copiously, sometimes twice or thrice, the thoughts, to

disentangle them into a connected whole; then make a syllabus, and lastly, a skeleton, which I take into the pulpit." He had great thoughts in his mind; as he mused, the fire burned; and when the divine afflatus was upon him, he sent forth those right and burning words which excited the admiration of those who heard them, and continued to charm those who read them, poorly and imperfectly as they have been reported.

This is the method of one equal to Robertson:—Early in the week he selects his texts; thinks about them, makes love to them, and forms his own idea of their meaning. Then he consults the best Biblical critics to make sure he is not misunderstanding, and therefore misrepresenting, them. Having done this, he writes his plan and leading thoughts, thinks until he sees his way right through his whole subject, and, leaving himself open to catch the inspiration of the hour, he often finds his best illustrations—illustrations of exquisite beauty and which make the deepest impression—in the very act of preaching. Few may equal the excellence to which he has attained, all may imitate the plan which he has adopted.

I have been favoured by perhaps the most popular preacher in the world with some information as to his method of preparing for the pulpit. I am sure it is not the best method for ministers in general; I question whether it is the best method for the brother beloved himself. At any rate, the statement of it is short, striking, characteristic. "My preparation never ceases in reality, but the specific preparation is from six to eleven on Saturday evening, and consists, at first, in making sketches and destroying them; then the text transfixes my soul, and I am at it. Read original; turn to comments; think it out; pray over it; write a sketch on a half sheet of note. Done! Dream of it all night; keep on thinking till I get into

the pulpit." A memory marvellous for its retentiveness, a mind wonderful for its activity, an imagination imperial in its sway, a facility of correct extemporaneous speech almost unequalled, and a degree of confidence most can envy and few can feel, and which enables him to say precisely what he likes and just how he likes, makes this plan, in his hands, a success. Men destitute of his natural gifts might find it something very different.

*Bristol.*

R. P. MACMASTER.

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## Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHILIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

### *Subject:* PROOFS OF PERSONAL PIETY.

"Judge me, O Lord;  
For I have walked in mine integrity;  
I have trusted also in the Lord;  
Therefore I shall not slide.  
Examine me, O Lord, and prove me;  
Try my reins and my heart.  
For Thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes;  
And I have walked in Thy truth.  
I have not sat with vain persons,  
Neither will I go in with dissemblers.  
I have hated the congregation of evil-doers;

And will wash mine hands in innocency :  
 So will I compass thine altar, O Lord ;  
 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving,  
 And tell of all Thy wondrous works.  
 Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house,  
 And the place where thine honour dwelleth.  
 Gather not my soul with sinners,  
 Nor my life with bloody men :  
 In whose hands is mischief,  
 And their right hand is full of bribes.  
 But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity :  
 Redeem me, and be merciful unto me.  
 My foot standeth in an even place :  
 In the congregations will I bless the Lord."—Ps. xxvi.

**HISTORY.**—The title of this Psalm ascribes it to David, and the high probability is, that it is his composition. Though the occasion of its production cannot be determined with absolute certainty, there is some reason for believing that there is reference to the assassination of Ishbosheth by Baanah and Rechab, mentioned in 2 Samuel iv. 5-8. The address of these assassins was so worded as to lend support to the idea that David had instigated the bloody deed. If the Psalm points to this circumstance, a special significance is given to David's appeal to Jehovah, to be adjudged of Him.

**ANNOTATIONS.**—*Ver. 1.*—"Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity." The meaning of this is, "My conduct has been, Thou knowest, according to my conscientious beliefs; I have been *sincere*." Sincerity, though essential to genuine religion, is not genuine religion. "*I have trusted also in the Lord.*" This means, that my reliance has not been upon myself, upon my friends, upon chance, but upon Jehovah. "*Therefore shall I not slide.*" Therefore, I shall not waver or swerve. He means that he would never waver from the principles that had hitherto been his guide, never resort to nefarious means for the accomplishment of his ends.

*Ver. 2.*—"Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart." Etymologists have suggested, the first verb in this clause signifies trial by touch; the second, by smell; the third, by fire. The second, however, generally refers to the trial of moral character, whilst the other two refer to the testing of metals by fire. He means, Test me thoroughly, however severe.

*Ver. 3.*—"For Thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in Thy truth." In this verse, he assigns the reason for his confidence, that he should not, in the future, waver or swerve from rectitude, because God's mercy was before him.

*Ver. 4.*—"I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers." "Vain persons" mean, men of falsehood, liars, deceivers, &c. "Dissemblers" mean crafty men, hidden men, as some render it,

hypocrites, men who work in masquerade. The vain and the dissembling, the false and the crafty, are twins. They have one nature and one parentage. The Psalmist says, he has not sat with such persons. "Sitting," says old Swinock, "is a posture of *choice*, is a posture of *pleasure*, and a posture of *abiding*. David certainly had been amongst such men, but he had not *sat* amongst them.

*Ver. 5.*—"I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked." This is stronger language still. He passes from the negative to the positive. He not only does not sit with them, but he *hates* them.

*Ver. 6.*—"I will wash mine hands in innocency : so will I compass thine altar, O Lord." This is an advance in moral sentiment. He not only hates wickedness, but he determines to adhere to the service of Jehovah. Washing the hands is an emblem of purity. Pilate used it for this purpose. (Matt. xxvii. 24.) The idea is, that he would go to the altar of Jehovah with all sincerity of soul. "David, willing to express his coming with a pure heart to pray to God, doth it by this similitude of a priest, that as a priest *washes his hands*, and *then offers ablation*, so had he constantly joined purity and devotion together."—*Henry Hammond*.

*Ver. 7.*—"That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Thy wondrous works." "To make known," that is, to cause to be heard. He resolved to go to the tabernacle in order to express to the congregation, in feelings of gratitude and devotion, the great things that Jehovah had done for him.

*Ver. 8.*—"Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." The expression, "Thine honour dwelleth" is in the margin "of the tabernacle of thine honour." By the word honour, perhaps he refers to the Shekinah, the symbol of the Divine presence, which was the "glory," both of the tabernacle and in the temple.

*Ver. 9.*—"Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men." Margin, "Men of blood." The word soul here does not mean merely the intelligent moral spirit, but the man himself. It means, "Gather me not with sinners : do not let me be amongst them."

*Ver. 10.*—"In whose hands is mischief." This is a further description of the men of blood. Their whole history is a history of mischief ; they are an injury to society and to the universe. "Their right hand is full of bribes." He revolted at any connection either with the cruel or the crafty. On the word bribes, the quaint Thomas Adams has the following quaint remarks:—"They that see furthest into the law, and most clearly discern the cause of justice, if they suffer the dust of bribes to be thrown into their sight, their eyes will water and twinkle, and fall at last to blind connivance. It is a wretched thing when justice is made a hackney, that may be backed for money, and put on with golden spurs, even to the desired journey's end of injury and iniquity. Far be from our souls this wickedness, that the ear which should be open to complaints should be stopped with the ear-wax of partiality. Alas ! poor truth, that she must now be put to the charges of a golden ear-pick or she cannot be heard !"



*Ver. 11.*—"But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity : redeem me, and be merciful unto me." "But as for me." The Hebrew is, "And I." But there is evidently a contrast between what he purposed to do, and the course of life pursued by those to whom he had just referred ; and that is correctly expressed in our translation, "*But as for me.*" It is a statement of his profession of piety, and of his purpose to lead a religious life. He *meant*—he solemnly *purposed* to lead a holy life.

*Ver. 12.*—"My foot standeth in an even place : in the congregation will I bless the Lord." The path of rectitude is an "even place." It is level as well as straight. It is as smooth as a velvet sward. A man who is on it cannot stumble.

**ARGUMENT.**—This Psalm contains—(1.) An appeal of one who is conscious of rectitude to God's equity and omniscience. (2.) An avowal of hearty dislike to the company of the wicked, and of love to the house of God. (3.) An earnest prayer, rising to full confidence, that God will separate him from sinners, and permit him to enjoy His service.

**HOMILETICS.**—Homiletically, we shall take this Psalm as suggesting to us some of the *Leading Proofs of Personal Piety*. In using the Psalm for this purpose, it is not necessary to concern ourselves with the questions as to what were the particular circumstances that gave rise to the composition, who was the author, whether he was, on the whole, a good man or not, or whether he was in a right state of mind when he wrote this poem. We have to do now with the Psalm only, so far as it *suggests* the leading criteria of genuine godliness. And we think that it indicates several of the most prominent proofs. Here is—

I. A STRONG CRAVING FOR A KNOWLEDGE OF THE REAL STATE OF THE CHARACTER. "Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity ; I have trusted also in the Lord ; therefore I shall not slide. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me ; try my reins and my heart." The meaning of this is, I want to know whether I have within me the root of the matter or not. I want *myself* revealed to my own consciousness by whatever test Thou, the Omniscient One, wilt employ, however painful it may be. Is not this a leading feature in genuine piety ? It is characteristic of an unregenerate soul to dread self-research—to ignore the great facts of its spiritual experience—to indulge in hopes not based on well-defined and

certain foundations. The genuine soul, on the contrary, craves for a thorough knowledge of self—struggles to get at the facts, whether they are for him or against him, condemnatory or otherwise. “Examine me, O God, not in order that Thou shouldst understand me—for Thou knowest me thoroughly—but that I should understand *myself*.” This craving implies two things—

First: *A belief in the possibility of being self-deceived.* We presume that deep in the moral constitution of every intelligent creature is the sentiment of *fallibility*. All creatures are fallible, as a fact, and it is only natural to suppose that their Maker has endowed them with a corresponding sentiment. But in the case of a fallen man, though renewed and advanced in holiness, the idea of the possibility of being self-deceived has been brought out and strengthened by experience. Has there ever been a good man on the earth who has not often discovered in himself instances of self-deception? Peter is only one of a thousand instances.

It implies—

Secondly: *A desire to be made right, at whatever cost.* Why does the truly good man desire a knowledge of his real character before God? Why? In order that he may utterly renounce whatever there may be found wrong within him either in thought, feeling, purpose, or habit, and to be brought into a complete accord with the principles of everlasting rectitude. What he wants is to be made *right*, to be thoroughly cleansed of all impurities, to be made holy, even as God is holy. His prayer is, “Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Brothers, have we this evidence of genuine godliness? a craving for this knowledge. A knowledge of self is verily a rare thing. Men are in quest of all knowledges rather than that of their own true moral state before God.

II. A PRACTICAL RECOGNITION OF GOD’S MERCY. “For Thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes, and I have walked in Thy truth.” God’s loving-kindness is infinite. It fills all space, it overflows time. It is the ocean on which the whole universe

swims. It is the great pulse of creation. To *fallen* man this loving-kindness has had a *special*, a marvellous, a mighty *manifestation* in Jesus Christ. It is the characteristic of unregenerate man practically to ignore this loving-kindness in all its manifestations; but to the man of genuine godliness it is the one dominant thought of his intellect, the ruling inspiration of his life. It is ever "before his eyes;" wherever he looks he sees it. He can see nothing without seeing it. Hence his life is marked by two grand features of character.

First: *The strongest gratitude.* Feeling that all his enjoyments are gifts that come down from the "Father of lights," his heart is ever overflowing with gratitude; praise is the breath of his soul; worship is the delight of his being. Gratitude is a *binding* sentiment. It binds the heart of the receiver to the giver. It is the golden chain that links the good man's heart to God. Gratitude is a *joyous* sentiment. The mind full of gratitude is the mind full of happiness. Hence the eternal heaven, of the good is a temple of praise. "Unto Him that loved us and washed us," &c. Gratitude is a *practical* sentiment. The first question that true gratitude asks in relation to the benefactor is, What shall I do to serve him? What shall I do to express my obligation? What shall I do to minister to the happiness of my benefactor? His life is marked—

Secondly: *By the highest courage.* A man who has a practical recognition of God's loving-kindness must ever be courageous in soul, for what has he to fear? What is poverty, physical torture, death, in the eye of the man whose whole horizon is flooded with Divine loving-kindness? Paul had the loving-kindness of God before him when he said, "None of these things move me." True religion indeed fills the soul with gladness and ennobles it with an invincible heroism.

Here is—

III. A PROFOUND CONSCIOUSNESS OF SINCERITY OF CONDUCT. "I have walked in Thy truth." This sentiment is uttered in other parts of the Psalm. In the first verse, he says, "I have walked in mine integrity." What he means is, "I have been

*sincere* in my conduct. I have not acted hypocritically. I have not professed one thing and done another. I have acted according to my convictions of right." What is sincerity? It is an agreement of our actions with our principles, of our conduct with our belief. That man is sincere only in the measure in which there is a perfect accord between the ideas and feelings of the inmost soul and the actions of his outer life. But a man may be sincere, and yet not genuinely religious, although he cannot be religious without being sincere. The man's beliefs and convictions may be radically wrong; and the conformity of his external conduct with them, whilst it would be sincerity, would be alien to real goodness. Saul of Tarsus was sincere in persecuting the followers of Christ. He thought he was doing God's service. Far enough are we from disparaging sincerity. We have some respect for men who show what they really are, though bad, very bad in heart. Let the villain show himself to be a villain. Let the devil show himself to be a devil. A good man must ever hate hypocrisy and loath shams. But for sincerity to become an essential part of true religion, not only must the outward conduct be true to *the inner soul*, but it must be true to *eternal right*. In appealing to the Omniscient One, the writer of the Psalm shows that he was conscious of sincerity. No man will dare appeal to heaven who does not feel that. Men under a consciousness of sincerity have always, under great trials and persecutions, turned from the judgments of earth to the judgments of heaven. George Whitfield, as well as hundreds of others, did this. "However, some may account me a mountebank and an enthusiast—one that is only going to make you methodically mad; they may breathe out their invectives against me, yet Christ knows all; He takes notice of it, and I shall leave it to Him to plead my cause, for He is a gracious Master. I have already found Him so, and am sure He will continue so. Vengeance is His, and He will repay it."

IV. A STRONG REPUGNANCE TO ALL UNGODLY SOCIETY. "I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers. I have hated the congregation of evil doers;

and will not sit with the wicked." And then, in the sixth and tenth verses, he expresses the same profound antagonism to such society. The terms here applied to characterize bad men, such as "vain persons," "dissemblers," "evil doers," "wicked," "sinners," "bloody men," "men in whose hands is mischief, and their right hand full of bribes," are all terribly significant. They reveal depravity in almost every type and grade. The writer here does three things in relation to these characters.

First, *He declares that he had never any fellowship with them.* "I have not sat with them," &c. He had, of course, to meet them, to transact business with them, and to make efforts for their intellectual and spiritual improvement. But he did not mingle with them as friends; he did not take them to him as companions.

Secondly, *He expresses his hatred of them.* "I have hated the congregation of evil doers." There is a right and wrong hatred of men: the hatred that has respect to the person, and the hatred that has respect to the character. To hate the person—the existence—of any man is wrong; it is to hate the workmanship of God. But to hate the *character* of a bad man is right, and even obligatory. God made the person, man made the character; and a bad character is an offence to the Almighty, and an injury to the universe; therefore, it is holy to hate it.

Thirdly, *He prays that he may not be gathered to their company.* "Gather not my soul with sinners." As there is a gathering time for the fruits of the earth, so there is a gathering time for men. Death is the reaper. With his scythe he mows down the generations, and Justice gathers whom he mows—some to misery, some to bliss. Who would be gathered with the sinners in the great world of retribution? Who would spend their eternity with the Herods, the Neros, and the Napoleons of the world? Even bad men pray against it. Wicked Balaam exclaimed, "Let me die the death of the righteous."

Why should good men have such a repugnance to the society of the wicked? (1.) Because their society is wrong.



Bad men are to be avoided. (2.) Because their society is pernicious. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." You may ascertain the character of a man by that of his companions.

Here is—

V. A DELIGHT IN THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD. "I will wash mine hands in innocency : so will I compass thine altar, O Lord : that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Thy wondrous works. Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth."

These verses teach that public worship—

First, *Requires personal preparation.* "I will wash mine hands in innocency." Men should cleanse themselves from all worldly and carnal thoughts before they enter the house of God. How much moral impurity gathers about the soul during six days of worldly care and toil !

These verses teach that public worship—

Secondly, *Consists in public acknowledgments.* "That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving." Observe : (1.) The *subject* of the publication, "All Thy wondrous works"—works of nature, providence, and grace. (2.) The *spirit* of the publication, "The voice of thanksgiving." Gratitude is the inspiration. Strong gratitude struggles for public song.

These verses teach that public worship—

Thirdly, *Is inspired with the presence of God.* "I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." God's presence is the attraction and inspiration. A delight in the public worship of God is one of the surest tests of genuine religion. He who neglects the services of the sanctuary may well have his piety questioned, whatever his professions may be.

Here is—

VI. A FIXED DETERMINATION TO WALK EVER WITH THE HOLY. "But as for me, I will walk ever in mine integrity :

redeem me, and be merciful unto me. My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the Lord."

CONCLUSION: Here, then, we have criteria by which to determine our own characters. Are we sincerely anxious to know our true moral state before God? Do we practically recognise God's loving-kindness? Have we a profound repugnance to the characters of ungodly men? Are we conscious of sincerity of conduct in all our dealings with God and men? Have we a delight in the public worship of the Almighty? Is it our fixed purpose, a purpose from which we are determined never to swerve, to walk in our integrity, stand in the "even place," and to bless the Lord in "the congregation?"



## A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the Island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19-21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

*Subject: SOUL MILITANCY.—EPH. vi. 10-20.*

*(Continued from page 279.)*

**I**N our last sketch we examined verses from 10-17, which homiletically represented the soul's *foes*—the *soul's strength*—the *soul's weapons*. These verses, namely, 18, 19, 20,

are a continuation of the same subject, and lead us to consider the *soul's religiousness*.

IV. THE SOUL'S RELIGIOUSNESS. Religiousness, namely, a conscious dependence on God, lies at the foundation of all true soul militancy. A man can do nothing rightly or successfully, in spiritual soldiership, who is not religious in the very spirit of his being. Religiousness is the only soil in which man's spiritual faculties can grow into heroic vigour. In materialism they wither; in mere intellectualism they are only skeletalonic at best; in religiousness they are like the tree planted by the rivers of water; their roots are in the Everlasting; they drink into them the very life of God. Religiousness, in one word, is the source that supplies the muscle and the instinct that gives the skill in true moral warfare. It teaches our "hands to war, and our fingers to fight." This religiousness is here described by the Apostle in these words:—"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me," &c. These words are so true to the original, and so obvious in their significance, that they call for no minute critical examination. They show us how this religiousness in the soul of the true spiritual soldier is to *express* itself; and it is to do so—

First: *In Prayer*. "Praying always with all prayer," or as Ellicott has rendered it, "*With all prayer and supplication, praying always in the Spirit.*" The words teach us—(1.) That the prayer is to be comprehensive—"with all prayer and supplication." All kinds of prayer, expressed and ejaculatory—private and social. Prayer is not so much a service as a spirit, not so much an act as a sentiment. Hence we are commanded to "pray without ceasing." Consciousness of dependence on God, which is the very essence of prayer, should run as a living current through the whole of our life. Our whole life should be an unbroken litany. The words teach us—(2.) That the prayer is to be Divine—"in the Spirit." That is, under the influence of the Divine Spirit who is to make intercessions for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. There

is no true prayer that is not dictated by this Spirit. Man's great care should be to lay his soul open to the Divine. If a man would have his body crave healthily for food, he must drink in as much as possible the fresh air of God; and if he would have his soul crave for spiritual food, he must breathe into his spiritual nature the breath of the Divine. The words teach us—(3.) That the prayer is to be Watchful—“And watching thereunto.” The soul has its moral moods. It has seasons favourable for culture—weathers for launching out on the deep. Its duty is to watch for these moods—watch the motions of the Divine Spirit upon the heart. Watch, as Elijah did on Carmel, for promising signs in the heavens. The words teach us—(4.) That the prayer should be Persevering—“With all perseverance.” We are to be instant in prayer. Our Saviour taught the duty of importunate prayer in the parable of the “unjust judge.” Importunity is needed, not to influence the Eternal to mercy, but to prepare our hearts rightly to receive His gifts.

The verses show that this religiousness is to express itself—

Secondly: In prayer for *the good in general*. “For all saints.” The Apostle would not have them merely to pray for themselves. He who prays exclusively for himself never prays at all. His prayers are but the breath of selfishness. Paul required them to pray for “all saints”—saints of every intellectual grade, of every social position, of every ecclesiastical sect, of every theological school, of every kingdom and every tribe. Why for all saints? Because all saints are members of the grand army battling against the common foe—against the “principalities of evil,” &c. The more force, courage, skill, each member of an army possesses, the better for the cause, the more likely the victory in whose advantages all participate. The battle of Christianity is a common battle—a battle against error, wrong, and depravity everywhere. All saints are engaged in it, and they should be prayed for.

The verses show that this religiousness is to express itself—

Thirdly: In prayer for *Gospel ministers in particular*. “And for me, that utterance may be given unto me.” Why does Paul wish them to pray for him? Is it that he might be

liberated from prison? No. He was now, he tells us, an "ambassador in bonds." The clanking chains of the prison hung heavily on him, and one would not have wondered if his first request had been to the Ephesians to pray for his bodily deliverance. But this he does not. He is too absorbed in the cause of Christ and universal happiness for this. What he prayed for was, that he might be enabled properly and successfully to preach the Gospel. "That I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel," that is, the Gospel that was once a mystery. The preaching of the Gospel was God's grand instrument for restoring the world to intelligence, dignity, and happiness, and because of that, he desired to do it in the most effective way. There are several remarkable things in these words. (1.) Paul was an *ambassador* from heaven—God's messenger sent to proclaim restoration to lost humanity. The grandest commission this. (2.) God's *ambassador* from heaven *in bonds*. Wonderful that the Great King, whose word could have shivered Rome into atoms, should have allowed his ambassador to have been in chains. But so it is; and we shall have an explanation ere long. (3.) God's ambassador from heaven in bonds, *losing all idea of his own personal sufferings, in the desire to help his race*. Though a prisoner at Rome, he was permitted to preach. (Acts xxviii. 30, 31.) And as a prisoner he wanted to discharge that high mission in the most effective way. For that he prays. A true Gospel minister has a right to ask the prayers of Christians for him *particularly*. Like a general in the army he has the most responsible position, the most arduous task. Failure in him may turn the tide of battle in favour of the foe.

Prayer then is a necessary qualification of spiritual soldier-ship. The victory cannot be won without it.

"Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;  
Prayer makes the Christian armour bright;  
And Satan trembles when he sees  
The meanest saint upon his knees."

Even the Great Commander of all the legions of the good



recognised the mighty power of prayer during His struggles on this earth. "Thinkest thou not that I could pray to My Father, and He would send me twelve legions of angels;" as if He had said, "With one breath of prayer I could bring the battalions of eternity to my aid."



## Germs of Thought.

### CHRISTMAS.

*Subject:* THE FIRST ADVENT OF CHRIST.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Galatians iv. 4, 5.

GOD'S dispensations, or modes of treating men, have been of a progressive character. The Apostle intimates in the context that there is as great a difference in His treatment of men under the law, and his treatment of them under the Gospel, as there is between a father's treatment of his child when under age, and of that when he has reached his majority. There is restriction in the former case, and freedom in the other. "When we were children we were under bondage; now when the fulness of time was come, we have obtained the adoption of children." Whilst we believe in God's progressive method of treating men, we are no believers in man's progressive advancement. It is common with some authors and preachers to represent the human race as passing through all the stages that mark the growth of the individual man—childhood, youthhood, manhood. This is pure fiction. One age seems to us to be almost as childish as another. Each generation displays the same inexperience, feebleness, and folly. Each makes the same blunders. In every age God is constantly interposing to correct men's blunders, and to set them right. It is true that with the progressive light of God's dispensations humanity ought to advance; but it does not.

The text leads us to consider the *first* advent of Christ—the event that brightened the dim morning of God's previous dispensations into high noon. And there are four remarks which the text suggests concerning this first advent.

I. He came at the RIGHT SEASON. "When the fulness of time was come." That is, when the course of ages had reached the period of time appointed of the Father. When the chronometer of the Divine purpose had struck the meridian hour, then Christ came.

First: *It was the set time in relation to the plan of God.* The Eternal, in His decrees, fixed the exact hour for His advent—fixed it before the universe existed, or time began. Christ came at the appointed time. He was punctual to the moment, neither too soon nor too late. That moment forms the centre of the world's history, the point in which all its events as radii meet—to which all the past points, from which all the future emanates.

Secondly: *It was the set time in relation to the state of the world.* Although four thousand years intervened between the fall of man and the advent of his great restorer, the world did not seem prepared for the event before. But now humanity was everywhere wearied of its own systems—was longing for a moral deliverer—had sunk into the hush of national quiet—had learned a common language—had placed itself under common government, and opened up thoroughfares through which messengers of the event could be despatched through every part of the world.\* And it was ready.

II. He came as a MESSENGER FROM GOD. "God sent forth His Son." That Christ was the Son of God in a higher sense than any other being in the universe, is a fact which admits of no debate amongst those who recognise the Divine authority of the New Testament. That relationship is to me a profound mystery, before which I bow in silence; and the

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\* See Conybere and Howson's *Life of St. Paul*, Vol. I., and Huls. Lect., 1846.

mutual love, too, which the relationship implies transcends immeasurably all my conceptions of emotionalities.

The Son came here as the messenger of the Everlasting Father. He was the great Apostle of the "Absolute One." But are not all men who come into the world sent by God? Or come they by chance, or by the appointment of some one else? All are sent. But there are, at least, two points of difference between the advent of Christ into this world, and that of any other man that has ever appeared.

First: *He had a prior existence.* It is true that Plato had the idea that all human souls had an existence before they came on this planet and took human flesh. But there is no authority for this. It is the mere dream of speculative philosophy. The Bible, however, assures us that Christ existed before all worlds. "He was in the beginning with God." He "was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, ere ever the earth was."

Secondly: *He came by His own choice.* Not one of all the generations of men that have appeared on this earth had any choice in the question, as to whether they should appear on this earth or not. They were sent here; they had no vote in the matter. The question whether they should come at all, or where or how, were points settled independent of them. Not so with Christ. It is true He was sent here by infinite love, but the love that sent Him inspired Him, filled His nature, and moved Him *freely*. He came rejoicing.

III. He came as the OFFSPRING OF HUMAN NATURE.—  
 "Made of a woman." He did not come in some angelic form, nor was He created directly human, as Adam was. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." But He was not only born of a woman, but born of a *Jewish* woman, "born under the law." The woman's seed was to be especially the seed of Abraham, through the line of Isaac and Jacob, of the tribe of Judah and the family of David. He was therefore a Jew, and subject to the Jewish law. Christ submitted to the Jewish law. He was circumcised, He was baptized, He worshipped in their synagogues, He

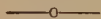
attended in the service of their temple, He was "obedient even unto death." We can see many good reasons for His *incarnation*, for His appearing in a human body. He brings down God into man's little horizon, brings the Infinite within man's small sphere of observation, reflection, sympathy, experience. He gives to God in man's view (1.) A *Personality*. The human soul wants a person on which to centre its love. In nature God's personality seems to be lost in the immensities of the universe. (2.) An *Approachability*. Where is God to be found? Nature says everywhere. This is too vague for man's little soul. He wants definiteness. In Christ we have it. In Him is the meeting-place. He is Emmanuel—God with us. (3.) *Attractability*. We want something to draw us to God. Nature is too grand, too reticent, and too cold for this. In Christ God is attractable. He has our infirmities, our faculties, and all saturated and swayed by infinite love and tenderness. (4.) *Immitability*. We want to become like God, to become partakers of the Divine nature. But where can we see Him as a *model*? Not in nature. There He is past finding out. In Christ He comes as the model. Blessed be Heaven that He was born of a woman. It was the seed of the woman alone that would bruise the serpent's *head*—crush the very seat of the evils that curse the human race.

IV. He came TO EFFECT A GRAND MORAL REDEMPTION.  
 "To redeem them that were under the law."

First: He came to redeem *men from the slavery of religious ritualism*. The Jew had been under the law. Its minute descriptions concerning diet, dress, travel, labour, prescriptions for home, for field, for birth, and for marriages, for trade and for war, for private piety and public worship, rested as a mighty load upon him, and became an intolerable burden. Christ came to redeem the Jew, and to redeem mankind from all letterism and ritualism in religion. He does it by giving them a new spirit, the spirit of children, the spirit of filial loyalty and love.

Secondly: He came to redeem *men from the slavery of all sin*. Sin is the worst kind of slavery—a slavery of soul, a

slavery which death cannot destroy. Christ came to inspire humanity with supreme love to the Infinite Father; and where this love is, there is holy freedom and progressive blessedness.



*Subject: DEATH.*

"Death has come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces."—Jeremiah ix. 21.

THE words suggest to us Death as an invading enemy.  
As an enemy—

I. He is CRUEL. *He strikes at the dearest objects of our affections.* Child, husband, wife, father, mother; what names are these! How they twine themselves around our hearts; yet Death, with his ruthless hand, tears them from us. He robs us of our most *useful men*—patriots, philanthropists, preachers, authors, &c. &c. He drags us *from the dearest things of the heart*, our fields of occupation, our social circles, our cherished plans and purposes. He *reduces our bodies to the dust*, seals the senses, paralyses the limbs, breaks up every part into its primitive dust. Cruel Death! Deaf to the strongest and most piercing cries of social life.

II. He is UNREMITTING. He never sheathes his sword—never pauses in his march; he never bivouacs; always at work: not an hour passes that he does not strike a thousand fatal strokes. He is as restless as the sea: whoever pauses, he is active; whoever is idle, he is busy—busy in every man, in every family, in every community, in every nation—busy with all.

III. He is SUBTLE. He fights in ambush; he steps stealthily into the house; he touches the food, and it becomes poison; he breathes into the air, and it becomes pestiferous; he lays his hand gently on the heart, and it grows still. Whilst his victims think themselves in the most robust health, he is instilling into their frames germs of mortal disease. He disguises himself; often appears as a most hospitable host, spreading out before men the choicest viands of earth. He works through the delicate dish and the sparkling wines.



IV. He is RESISTLESS. Men through ages have tried to resist him, but every effort and every expedient have failed. All that science and art and wealth and caution could do have been done a thousand times, and as often failed. The granite castles and the body-guards of Sovereigns are powerless before him. The mighty warrior who has fought and won many a battle drops his sword, falls from his horse, and becomes dust in his presence.

V. He is UBIQUITOUS. There is no spot on this earth where he is not at work. He is in the waves of air, and on the billows of the deep; he is in the valley and on the hill, in the mead and on the mountain. He is in the rolling river and in the rattling brook; he is in the leaves of the forest, and in the flowers of the field; he is in the fowls of the air, the creatures of the deep, and the "cattle upon a thousand hills." The whole earth is his dominion.

VI. He is CONQUERABLE. "The last enemy shall be destroyed." There is one who will swallow up death in victory: Christ has conquered death. (1.) In His own resurrection. (2.) In His power upon the mind of His disciples. He has destroyed the fear of death in His people, so that they can triumphantly exclaim, "O Death, where is thy sting?" Death need not be a terror to us. "I congratulate you and myself," said John Foster, "that life is passing fast away. What a superlatively grand and consoling idea is that of death! Without this radiant idea, this delightful morning-star, indicating that the luminary of eternity is going to rise, life would, to my view, darken into midnight melancholy. Oh, the expectation of living *here* and living *thus* always would be, indeed, a prospect of overwhelming despair. But thanks be to that fatal decree that dooms us to die! thanks to that Gospel which opens the vision of an endless life! and thanks, above all, to that Saviour friend who has promised to conduct all the faithful through the sacred trance of death into scenes of Paradise and everlasting delight."

*Subject : SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF MAN.*

“For the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts : if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee : but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever.”—1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

THESE are the words of David to his son Solomon. The former had lived a life of stirring interest, and on the whole a life of devotedness to truth and God. He had served his generation ; the evening of life was falling in thickening shadows around him, and he was about being “gathered to his fathers.” And now, like Moses and Joshua, he assembles all the great men of his kingdom, and delivers to them a valedictory address. After this, he turns to Solomon, and says, “Thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts,” &c.

We may look at these words as presenting man to us in three solemn aspects.

I. AS INSPECTED BY THE EYE OF GOD. “The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.” God knows each *individual* man thoroughly : He does not overlook the units in the millions ; each stands distinctly before Him, and everything about each is fully known to Him. Thoughts, purposes, feelings in their most nascent stage, fall under His searching glance : He knows what each man has been, all that he is now, and all that he ever will be. “There is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.”—Ps. cxxxix. 4. This fact should impress us—

First: With the *importance* of our existence. God esteems each man worthy of His especial notice. “Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him ?” &c.

Secondly: With the *solemnity* of our existence. Human life is no trifling thing ; fools only regard it as such. Frivolity is moral madness. Is it not a solemn thing to move ever under the searching eye of God ? The words present man to us :—

II. AS INVITED TO THE FRIENDSHIP OF GOD.” “If thou seek

Him, He will be found of thee." The simple meaning of these words is this, if you seek His friendship you shall get it.

First: It is *worth* seeking. To have Him as your friend is to have everything; it is to have infinite wisdom to guide you, Almighty power to support you, inexhaustible goodness to supply all your needs.

Secondly: It *requires* seeking. You cannot get it without an earnest quest. You must seek it by coming in holy meditation and practical faith to Christ, where, alone, you can meet Him. Man and God can only meet and form a friendship in Christ. The words present man to us:—

III. AS THREATENED WITH THE DISPLEASURE OF GOD. "If thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever." To forsake Him is to be alienated from Him in thought and sympathy, to be estranged from Him in soul. As the prodigal left his father's house and went into a far country, men everywhere, in an unregenerate state, turn their backs upon the Great Father and wander away. The unconverted world is far off from God. It is in the dark region of practical atheism. Those who continue in this state will be thrown off from Him. "God," says an old author, "never cast man off until they first cast Him off." What is it to be cast off by God? Ah, what?



LET the fairest star be selected like a beauteous island in the vast and shoreless sea of the azure heavens, as the future home of the criminals from the earth, and let these possess whatever they most love, and all that it is possible for God to bestow; let them be endowed with undying bodies, and with minds which shall for ever retain their intellectual powers; let no Saviour ever express His claims upon them, no Holy Spirit visit them, no God reveal Himself to them, no Sabbath ever dawn upon them, no saint ever live among them, no prayer ever be heard within their borders; but let society exist there for ever, smitten only by the leprosy of hatred to God, and with utter selfishness as its all-prevailing and eternal purpose, then, as sure as the law of righteousness exists, on which rests the throne of God and the government of the universe, a society so constituted must work out for itself a hell of solitary and bitter suffering to which there is no limit except the capacity of a finite nature! Alas! the spirit that is without love to its God or its neighbour is already possessed by a power which must at least create for its own self-torment a worm that will never die, and a flame that can never more be quenched!

—*Dr. Macleod.*

## The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbosities; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

No. XII.—THOMAS MANTON, D.D.

*Subject:* A SERMON FOR THE END OF A YEAR.

“Whereas ye know not what shall be upon the morrow; for what is your life? it is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”—James iv. 14.

HAVING discovered the carnal presumption of certain men, the Apostle now disproveth it by two arguments:—The casualties of the next day; the uncertainty of their own lives: both of which give a notable check to such fond confidence.

“*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow.*” As if he had said, You talk of a long time, and you know not what shall happen the next day: every day bringeth new providences and events with it. But you will say, Is it simply unlawful to provide for the morrow, or for time to come? I answer, No. Solomon biddeth us to learn of the ant, “Consider her ways, and be wise; she provideth her meat in summer, and gathereth her food in harvest.”—Prov. vi. 6-8; so Prov. xxx. 25. It is but a wise foresight to secure ourselves against visible inconveniences. Joseph is commended for laying up food in the cities against the years of famine.—Gen. xli. 35. And it was the practice of the Apostles to lay up in store for the brethren at Jerusalem against the famine foretold by Agabus.—Acts xi. 29. Only remember this must be done with caution; such provision must not arise from distrust, or a thought prejudicial to the care of Providence.—Matt. vi. 30. It must not hinder us from the great care of our lives—provision for heaven.—Matt. vi. 34. It must be with submission to God. God may soon disappoint all; and what we have caught in hunting we may not roast. “*For what is your life? it is even a vapour.*” Brevity of life is set forth by many comparisons in Scripture. By the flower of

the field (Isa. xl. 6, 7); by the wind (Job vii. 7); a leaf before the wind (Job xiii. 25); by a shadow (Job xiv. 2). There is a heap of similitudes. Job ix. 25, "Now my days are swifter than a post; they flee away, and see no good; they pass away as swift ships, as the eagle hasteth to the prey." The Word useth the more similitudes, that by every fleeting and decaying object we might be remembered of our own mortality; as also to check those proud desires which are in man, of an eternal abode, and lasting happiness in this life. In that place of Job there is a monument of man's frailty set forth in all the elements. Go to the land, and there is a post; go to the sea, and there is a swift ship; look to the air, and there is an eagle. The heathen poets are much in deciphering the frail estate of man. Æschylus saith, man's life is *κάπνοῦ σκία*, the shadow of smoke; and Pindar, *σκίαι ὄναρ*, the dream of a shadow. The similitude used here is that of a vapour. It were to trifle to show the resemblance in other things: it is brought only to show the swift passage of it, and because a man's life is but a little warm breath turned in and out by the nostrils; a narrow passage, and soon stopped.—Isa. ii. 22. Observe out of the whole verse two points—

I. THE CASUALTIES OF THE NEXT DAY. It is a common argument; heathens are much in it. Well, then, let every day's care be enough for itself, and live every day as the last day. Petrarch telleth of one who, being invited to dinner the next day, answered, "Ego a multis annis crastinum non habui"—"I have not had a to-morrow for these many years." And Ludovicus Capellus telleth us of one Rabbi Eleazer, that advised men to repent but one day before their death; that is, presently; it may be the next before the last. It is a sad thing to promise ourselves many years, and to have our souls taken away that night: to measure out our time and years by our carnal projects, and of a sudden we and all our white thoughts perish (Psa. cxlvi. 4). Godly men wait for their change; upon others it cometh unexpected. It is observable, that of bad men it is said their souls are not resigned, but taken away. "What hope hath



the hypocrite, when God shall take away his soul?" (Job xxvii. 8.) So, "this night shall they take away thy soul" (Luke xii. 20). Wicked men would dwell longer in the body, their carnal projects are never at an end; but of a sudden God cometh and snatcheth away their souls.

II. THE UNCERTAINTY OF THEIR OWN LIVES. Man's life is very short; it is a vapour that soon appeareth and disappeareth, dispersed as soon as raised: "Surely every man walketh in a vain show" (Psa. xxxix.). Though they toss to and fro, yet the whole course of their lives is but a flying shadow—a little spot of time between two eternities. Austin doubteth whether to call it a dying life, or a living death.

First: *This checketh those that pass away their time rather than redeem it*; prodigal of their precious time, as if they had too much of it. Our season is short, and we make it shorter. It is time for all of us to say, "The time past is more than enough to have wrought the wills of the flesh" (1 Pet. iv. 3); or, as it is (Rom. xiii.), "It is high time to awake out of sleep," &c.; which was the Scripture that converted Austin.

Secondly: *If life be short, then moderate your worldly cares and projects*. Do not cumber yourselves with too much provision for a short voyage: the ship goeth the swifter the less it is burdened; men take in too much lading for a mere passage.

Thirdly: *Be more in spiritual projects*, that you may lay up the foundation for a longer life than you have to live here. Do much work in a little time. Shall we lose any part of that which is so short, or in a short life make way for a long misery? The Apostle saith, "I will put you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this tabernacle" (2 Pet. i. 13). We are all shortly to divest ourselves of the upper garment of the flesh; let us do all the good that we can. Christ lived but thirty-two years, or thereabouts; therefore, he went about doing good, and healing every sickness and every disease. Ministers pack their matter close when they have but a little time. So should you. You have but a short time, be the more diligent.

URIJAH R. THOMAS, Bristol.

## Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXV.

*Subject : THE DOOMED LIFE OF A LIE.*

"The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment."—Prov. xii. 19.

WHILE the promise to the lip of truth is that it shall be established for ever, the promise—for, in the interests of all that is good, is it not one?—concerning the tenure of falsehood is, that "a lying tongue is but for a moment."

Dean Swift complains, indeed, that the influence of a lie is often mischievously lasting; so often does it happen that if a lie be believed, only for an hour, it has done its work, and there is no further occasion for it. The ninth chapter of his, or Arbuthnot's, "Art of Political Lying" professes to treat of the duration of lies; and here we read that lies are of all sorts, from hours and days to ages; that there are some which, like insects, die and revive again in a different form; the writer adding, in his ironical way—be it the Dean or the Doctor—that good artists, like people who build upon a short lease, will calculate the duration of a lie surely to answer their purpose; to last just as long, and no longer, than the turn is served.

But the inherent mortality of whatever is false is recognised in other proverbs than those of King Solomon—on the principle enounced by Cicero when he says that *ficta omnia celeriter, tanquam flosculi, decidunt; nec simulatum potest quidquam esse diuturnum*. Archbishop Trench, in his chapter on the theology of proverbs, calls attention to a class of them, which he describes as penetrated with the assurance that One who, Himself being the Truth, will make truth in small and in great to triumph at the last, is ruling over all. Such a proverb is the homely English one, "A lie has no legs;" and its expositor hails it as true alike in its humblest application and its highest, be the lie the miserable petty falsehood which disturbs a family or a neighbourhood for a day, or one of the larger frauds, the falsehoods not in word only, but in act, to

which a longer date and a far larger sphere are assigned, which for a time seem to fill the world, and to carry everything in triumph before them. "Still the lie, in that it is a lie, always carries within itself the germs of its own dissolution. It is sure to destroy itself at last." Its priests may prop it up from without, may set it on its feet again, after it has once fallen before the presence of the truth, yet all this will be labour in vain. It will only be, like Dagon, again to fall, and more shamefully and irretrievably than before.\*

To every reader familiar with the writings of Mr. Carlyle, the remembrance will occur of passages by the score, graphic, incisive, and severely in earnest, iterated and reiterated, almost without mercy, in affirmation of the perishable nature of a lie, by and through and because of the very nature of it. This is one of his vital doctrines, one of his fundamental articles, one of his most salient points; and upon its value as a necessary truth he is never tired of insisting. "There is no lie, in the long run, successful. The hour of all windbags does arrive; every windbag is at length ripped, and collapses." So he writes in one place. In another: "Lying is ever the forerunner of death—nay, is itself death." In another: "Is it not from of old indubitable, that untruth has no power to continue in this true universe of ours?" Again: "Lies exist only to be extinguished; they wait and cry earnestly for extinction." "No lie you can speak or act, but it will come, after longer or shorter circulation, like a bill drawn on nature's reality, and be presented then for payment, with the answer, *No effects*." "No Falsehood, did it rise heaven-high and cover the world, but Bankruptcy one day will sweep it down and make us free of it." Elsewhere, again, in contrast with Truth, which, of whatever kind, breeds ever new and better truth; as even hard granite rock will crumble down into soil, under the blessed skyey influences, and cover itself with verdure, with fruitage, and umbrage: "But as for

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\* "Perhaps the Spanish form of this proverb is better: *La mentira tieno cortas las piernas*; for the lie does go, though not far. Compare the French: *La vérité, comme l'huile, vient au dessus*."—*Trench on Proverbs*, Lect. vi.

Falsehood, which, in like contrary manner, grows ever falser, what can it, or what should it do but decrease, being ripe; decompose itself, gently or even violently, and return to the Father of it—too probably in flames of fire?" "For if there be a Faith from of old, it is this, as we often repeat, that no Lie can live for ever. . . . All Lies have sentence of death written down against them in Heaven's chancery itself; and, slowly or fast, advance incessantly towards their hour." "Ruin is the great Sea of Darkness, whither all falsehoods, winding or direct, continually flow." "Truth or God will have nothing to do with the Devil or falsehood, but will ravel all the web to pieces if you introduce the Devil or Non-veracity in any form into it." "Truth, fact, is the life of all things; falsity . . . is certain to be dead, and is already insanity, to whatever thing takes up with it." In the end, "lies and delusion sink to Zero." "Lying is not permitted in this universe. Lying means damnation in this universe; and Beelzebub, never so elaborately decked in crowns and mitres, is *not* God." No less urgently in his latest book than in his earliest and intermediate ones, Mr. Carlyle is forward to assert, and fertile in proof, that the nature of facts is entirely inexorable, and that utterly vain is all sophistry to save any mortal who does *not* stand on the truth of things, from sinking, in the long run. *Ψευδόμεγος οὐδὲς λανθάνει πολὺν χρόνον.*

"Nothing," affirms a political philosopher, of an earlier and quite another school, "can give stability and durable uniformity to error. Indolence or ignorance may keep it floating, as it were, on the surface of the mind, and sometimes hinder truth from penetrating; or force may maintain it in possession, when the mind assents to it no longer. But such opinions, like human bodies, tend to dissolution from their birth. . . . Men are dragged into them, and held down in them, by chains of circumstances. Break but these chains, and the mind returns with a kind of intellectual elasticity to its proper object—truth."

M. Veron tells a story of a question that fell to the Emperor Napoleon at one of those *jeux de salon* at the Tuileries, in which the "game" consists in drawing at haphazard a written

question, to which the drawer is bound to make a prompt reply. "How to distinguish a lie from the truth?" was the written query, to which he had to make, on the instant, as *spirituel* an answer as he could. And very *spirituel*, indeed, was thought to be the answer he did make. "Open the door to the truth and to the lie," said the Emperor, "and the lie will be the first to come in." M. Cuvillier Fleury, who admires the response, so far qualifies his admiration as to remark that, "Yes, his Majesty was right; the lie is the first to come in, and truth effects a later entrance, *claudio pede*." But then the lie, sooner or later, has to be off and away—the truth remains. The one is a vanishing, the other a constant quantity.

FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.



## The Preacher's Dissecting Room.

"I SPEAK AS TO WISE MEN."

No. XII.

T. BINNEY.

WE resume and conclude in this article our notice of Mr. Binney's admirable sermon on "Salvation by Fire, and Salvation in Fulness." And we would advert, in so doing, in the present paper, to a somewhat unfavourable feature which has rather pressed itself on our attention. There is one particular in regard to which we think he has rather missed the right mark. And we are disposed to dwell upon it now a little, partly by way of balance to the eulogistic tone of our last notice, and still more, because the mistakes of a preacher of such eminence, being more conspicuous from his very eminence, are all the more useful for the purposes of instruction and warning. Every one can see the reality of an obstacle which brings a giant to the ground.

In order to appreciate the point we allude to, it will be necessary to quote Mr. Binney again at some length. Towards the close of the expository portion of his discourse he writes thus:—



"There is 'salvation in fulness'—and there is 'salvation by fire.' There is the 'abundant entrance' into the kingdom of God; and there is the getting in with something like 'difficulty.' One man may be conducted to his 'joy and crown' through thronging multitudes, amid outstretched hands and reverberating hosannas, and along the great public thoroughfares of the city; while another shall advance with hesitating step; be glad to get an entrance without observation; be met by no congratulating crowds; creep stealthily through some unfrequented street to his undistinguished abode;—tremulous with a thankful though shaded joy that he is saved at all!"

After which, in proceeding to the "application" of his subject, he opens the point which he takes up first in the following way:—

"1. In the first place, you should admit, I think, and impress upon your souls, that what we have advanced *must* be true—first impressions to the contrary, or doubts and difficulties from other quarters, notwithstanding. That such doubts and difficulties may be felt by many, we have no wish to conceal. We have put the subject, in both its aspects, rather more strongly perhaps than is usual, though not more so, most assuredly, than the plain meaning of the Word warrants. Very possibly, however, some who have never thought of anything but justification by faith, 'eternal life' as 'the gift of God,' and correlative subjects, may be startled and scandalized by what, at first sight, may seem to be contrary to their views of truth, or out of harmony with their habits of feeling. But, if the passages I have expounded do not mean what they *say* (which is all I have brought out of them), what *do* they mean? If they mean what they say, that meaning is a truth; as such, it must be in harmony with all other truth, whether we can perceive that harmony or not; and, with the like condition, simply as a separate piece of truth, it is practically binding on the conscience of the Church. I firmly believe in justification by faith,—in the pardon of the sinner on the ground, exclusively, of Christ's glorious redemptive act. A thing, this, purely gratuitous; in itself incapable of degrees; admitting, therefore, of no modification in different individuals in consequence of differences in *them*, but conferred upon all alike, in virtue of their union by faith with Him, whose work is the Divine reason for the blessing being bestowed at all. There is no doubt about all this; but depend upon it, whether you can see it or not, there is a harmony between this justification by faith and a judgment by works; and—whether you have yet found it or not—there is a principle, somewhere, on which that harmony can be demonstrated. In some way or other there is 'a prize' of our 'high calling,' as well as 'a gift' of God 'through Jesus Christ.' There is 'a crown' in relation to which some may '*so run*' as to 'obtain,'—and some so, that another shall 'take' it. There is a being saved—and nothing more; saved because *on* the foundation; saved, as it were, with difficulty, like 'a brand plucked from the burning;' that is,—'so as by fire:' and there is a being saved 'abundantly;' saved—and something more; saved and distinguished,—distinguished, because *to* the foundation has been 'added' *that* which the Master will delight to recognise and honour.

"It may not be easy to understand this. It may be difficult to reconcile the second thing with the first, or with much that would appear to be the teaching of Scripture. How different, it may be said,—how much more

comforting,—the parable of Christ in which He illustrates the grace and sovereignty of the Lord of the vineyard! He who can 'do what He will with His own,' is there represented as giving the very same reward to those who had served only one hour, as to those who had gone through the toil of twelve, and had 'borne the burden and heat of the day.' Very true. Let me warn you, however, that going to the parables is rather dangerous, unless you are accompanied by a well-instructed and trustworthy guide. You will find in them, I am afraid, far more that it will be difficult for you to reconcile with the popular idea of gratuitous justification, than what will illustrate it; and far more, certainly, corroborating and confirming than appearing to oppose the doctrine of this discourse. I quite admit that the parable of the 'penny' does, at first sight, seem to oppose it. But that of the 'talents,' of 'the faithful and wise steward,' 'the unjust steward,' and several others, directly sustain us. The fact is, no parable is meant to teach everything. Even as a whole, the parables are not intended to reveal *the Gospel*, properly so called; while, as to some views which have often been associated with it, as if belonging to its very essence, the pith and point of certain of the parables are dead against them. Look at that of the unforgiving servant. His debt is freely remitted by his lord,—answering to gratuitous justification; he goes forth exulting in the consciousness of his new condition—'the grace in which he stands,' and in which he is permitted to 'rejoice';—but, acting inconsistently with it, he is summoned again to the august presence; his pardon is revoked: it is abrogated and annulled; his lord recalls the benefit conferred; *unjustifies* him, so to speak; reimposes the debt, and orders him 'to be delivered to the tormentors till he has paid the uttermost farthing!' Now, I am not going to discuss this subject at present, nor to expound my views of the principle on which the parables must be explained, to make them perfectly tally with Evangelical teaching; but such a principle there no doubt is, whether we have succeeded in finding it or not. So, in relation to our previous remarks, we have only to repeat, that whether or not you see the harmony between the views we have advocated and the admitted doctrine of justification by faith, you *must* conclude that there *is* such harmony,—that there cannot but be a principle somewhere that reconciles the two things together,—for that the views advanced are expressly taught in the passages before us is a thing that admits of no denial; being taught,—taught by inspired, apostolic men,—they are true; as true, they must be in unison with all other truth; and in common with everything else that is a part of truth—God's truth—they are binding alike on our reason and our conscience;—have a right to a place in our system of belief, and a right to rule in our daily habits with whatever practical force there may be in them.

"The fact is, that different Churches, and different schools of theology, are in danger of holding their characteristic principles in a way that exaggerates them; they are not seen in their proper dimensions, from not being looked at in their just relations to other truths. Revivals and Reformations have too frequently been merely reactions against particular errors or prominent abuses. They have led often, and very naturally, to people running to the opposite extreme of what they saw to be wrong,—as if they were then sure to be right. While restoring and establishing a lost truth, men get so exasperated against the error they oppose, that they lose sight of some other truth of which that error may be an exaggeration. Popery was a great mechanical apparatus for the formal manufacture of Christian people. Ritually infusing spiritual life; sustaining and regulating, purifying and advancing it by various

devices, all empirical; always contemplating its masses and myriads as Christians,—their virtues as *Christian* virtues,—their failures as spiritual defects,—they and them, therefore, to be all contemplated and treated in this light, both in the present world and another,—a vast system of error was the consequence, developed at last into impudence and fraud. Against this, the Reformation protested, and on one side took the shape of the re-assertion of the doctrine of justification *by faith*,—opposing this to priestly ritualisms, to secular morality, to desert and merit in every form. In doing this, it is not to be denied, there was a danger that the Reformation should lose sight of what *was* a truth—the *sinner's justification by faith, notwithstanding*,—namely, the *Christian* life of the justified man; the relation of that life to the rewards of eternity; the intrinsic and recognised value of its virtues, as contrasted with the worthlessness of ‘works of law’ done *with a view* to justification itself. The danger, it must be confessed, was not wholly escaped, nor have the consequences been slight or few. An almost exclusive attention has been given to one thing (a great truth), to the forgetfulness of another thing (equally a truth). Hence the difficulty felt in tolerating certain ideas and expressions—which, nevertheless, are simply the utterance of ‘the mind of the Spirit’—on the worth and rewardableness of that virtue which is the outflow and actings of a real, healthy, divine life. It may be difficult, but, depend upon it, it is not impossible, to find some ground of reconciliation between the doctrine of justification by faith and that portion of truth which underlay the error, against which we embodied our protest in the revival and re-assertion of ‘the doctrine of a standing or falling Church.’”

The above extract contains the feature on which we wish to say a few words. Examined, if we may say so, artistically, what are its nature and effect? It is little more or better, we submit, than the statement or admission of a difficulty, combined with a strong declaration of opinion that, in consideration of what has gone before, the difficulty ought not to be allowed to invalidate the main conclusions already arrived at. Something is said, no doubt, and said truly, as to the manner in which such perplexing doctrinal difficulties originate and develop; and this is, so far, a sort of indirect answer to the special difficulty in question. It shows, at any rate, that it is the kind of thing to be expected in almost any conceivable case; and it serves, therefore, if we allow its correctness, to prove the possibility at least of the position advanced being a correct one, this particular difficulty or objection notwithstanding. But this is only a negative argument after all. It only goes to show that the counter-consideration adduced is not absolutely and immediately overwhelming. It is sufficient, it may be, to postpone defeat, but that is all; it is certainly not sufficient to ensure the victory—sufficient, possibly, to warrant a suspension but not a conviction of the judgment. Practically, therefore, our condition as learners is not so good as it was. We were previously in the condition of soldiers advancing steadily

towards an important position, without being aware of the existence of any hostile force between us and it. There was nothing but open gates, and grassy slopes, and unpeopled roads in our sight. Suddenly we find that there is an enemy in full equipment encamped and drawn up in the way, that every grassy mound is bristling with cannon, and every gate and every way of approach is threatened and enfiladed by death-dealing guns. It is not exactly an encouragement, then, after such a discovery, to be told that it was the kind of thing to be expected. Soldiers who have very great confidence in their general would not fall, indeed, into utter despair in consequence of such a prospect. But they would require something more than such an assurance, to advance with the same alacrity as before.

The kind of mistake, therefore, which we believe ourselves to have discovered in this instance will be easily understood. It is the mistake of stating an objection without replying to it—of stating it, indeed, with almost unnecessary force and emphasis, so as suddenly to check and hinder the previous onward march of conviction, and then to leave us standing in the open with this hostile encampment in our path. As a matter of simplicity and guilelessness, we admire this manly courage very greatly. As a matter of policy and strategy, we cannot admire it, to say the least, in the same unreserved way. Is it wise to exhibit thus impressively the adversary's advantages? Is it necessary as a matter of good faith? Is it not, in fact, almost suicidal, and destructive of success to the supposed truth itself, thus to acknowledge without answering the difficulties in its way? One of two other things, in short, it appears to us, should have been done in this case. Either the troops should have been led past the enemy beyond the reach of his guns, as it were, to a position from which they might afterwards have been brought down victoriously on his flank; or else, the forces displayed in opposition should have been directly attacked and overcome. Does not this commend itself to the judgment? Either avoid an objection, or else reply to it:—the latter line, of course, being the better of the two.

At the same time, we are free to acknowledge that this general principle, like all others, admits of possible exceptions in certain cases; and we are much inclined, in fact, to believe, from what is intimated in this volume as to the peculiar nature of the occasion when this sermon was delivered, that Mr. Binney had such a case then before him. We believe that he had to do with a set of hearers to whom the objection he mentions would occur, whether he himself



referred to it or not. And we also presume that they were a set of thinkers, to whose unassisted hands he might leave the task of providing a sufficient answer, with great confidence and good warrant. In such circumstances, it is evident, of course, that a special line of strategy would be required, or would be justifiable, at any rate, if not required. But, for all this, we cannot feel satisfied, speaking of the ordinary run of things in the world of thought, with a discussion that is opened and not closed—with a story that is left off in the middle—with a tower begun and not finished—with a ghost that is “raised” and not “laid.” It is probable enough, as we said before, that Mr. Binney, on this particular occasion, did not take this unusual line without reasons of an unusual nature on his side; but it is not for us, who study his writings with a view to our own improvement in the art of preaching, to adopt a similar line as our rule. As a general principle, we may safely lay down that which we have expressed before, viz., that a difficulty should be avoided, or else destroyed. Half measures are entire mistakes—as in other matters, so in this. They are like Pilate washing his hands before the multitude—a proceeding which only showed that he ought to have done very much more; and which was so far from removing the stain of his guilt, as we suppose he intended, that it only displayed it to the world.

MATHEMATICUS, M.A.,

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## Biblical Criticism.

(Continued from p. 236.)

VER. 33.—Οἱ διὰ πίστεως κατηγωνίσαντο βασιλείας—who, through faith, subdued kingdoms. Boehme understands these words to mean, “Acquired kingdoms for themselves in war,” and conceives that, besides referring to conquests of an earthly kind, they allude to the struggles needful on the part of Christians to secure a heavenly kingdom. But καταγωνίζομαι, though it has a middle form, is always used with an active signification, and means simply to conquer or subdue, whether subsequent appropriation follows or not, as in Plutarch,



ἀπὸ Καίσαρος τοῦ καταγωνισαμένου Πομπήιον. (Numbers xix.) Doubtless, not one case only, but several, were in the apostle's view when he penned these words. Certainly they apply to Gideon, the first person mentioned in the preceding verse, who conquered the Midianites; but they are no less applicable to David, who subdued the Moabites, Ammonites, Idumeans, and Philistines; and they hold good, in a particular manner, of Joshua, who overthrew so many kingdoms in Canaan, and took possession of their territories. The subduing of kingdoms seems a less appropriate sphere for the exercise of faith than any other of the things mentioned by the apostle. The conqueror has generally been impelled by the lust of temporal renown, and his achievements have exhibited but one continued triumph of injustice. But the wars to which our text refers were undertaken at the command of God, and were designed by Him to punish nations who had filled up the measure of their iniquity, and to put His own chosen people in possession of their promised inheritance. Joshua, and Gideon, and David, and all the heroes referred to, received instructions from heaven as to their career; and when they drew the sword, and executed their several commissions, their achievements were the fruit of faith. Saul spared where he was commanded to destroy, and this was reckoned an act of rebellion against the King of heaven. So Joash was blamed by Elisha for only smiting three times upon the ground, and thus restricting the overthrow which he was to be the instrument of inflicting upon Syria.

*Εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην* is a general phrase, which in Acts x. 35, and Ps. xv. 2, describes a life of uprightness and integrity. In this sense obviously it would be applicable to all the saints of the old dispensation, without distinction; and accordingly, Theodoret's remark is, *τοῦτο κοινὸν των ἁγίων ἀπάντων*. This view is adopted by Erasmus, Grotius, and others. Yet, as all the other examples mentioned by the apostle exhibit something specific, the probability is that this phrase also points to some particular manifestations of righteousness, such as the procedure of upright judges and kings. It is persons who occupied positions of eminence that are

mainly referred to. Some by faith subdued kingdoms; others, under the influence of the same principle, executed justice and judgment. Examples of such integrity we find in the administration of Samuel, whose name is mentioned in the preceding verse; and also in the government of David and other kings and judges. A righteous ruler stays the arm of the oppressor, and extends the shield of his protection over the weak and defenceless. What a blessing is it to a community when those who sit at the helm of affairs are regulated in all their procedure by a regard to the will of heaven!

Ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιών—obtained promises. Two different courses are taken by interpreters in expounding these words. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Bengel, Bleek, and others, understand them to describe the simple receiving of promises; but Owen, Boehme, De Wette, and most others, view them as referring to the obtainment of the blessings themselves. Bleek argues that the latter cannot be the apostle's meaning, because in verses 13 and 39 he plainly says that the saints spoken of all died without having received the promise; and it is alleged that he would hardly make two such apparently contradictory statements. But this reasoning is wholly devoid of force, for the promises referred to in verses 13 and 39 are promises relating to the Messiah and the blessings of His time, which, of course, were not fulfilled to any during the continuance of the old dispensation. But the events spoken of in the verse before us were all of an earthly kind, and occurred in the lifetime of the ancient saints. Abraham, and David, and Hezekiah, and others, though they did not witness the fulfilment of the Messianic promises, yet had many special promises accomplished in their own experience; and, in fact, the very words under consideration are applied to Abraham in the sense we contend for in chap. vi. 15, where we are told that, having received the promise of seed from God, he waited patiently, and in the end, ἐπέτυχε τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, obtained the fulfilment of the promise, or the promised blessing, in the birth of Isaac. Nay, the passages appealed to by Bleek do themselves support this view, for in both of them the word ἐπαγγελία, as he acknowledges, means not promise, but promised blessing.

It admits of no doubt at all, therefore, that ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν means obtained promised blessings. If it simply meant "had promises given to them," how could this be described as a consequence of faith? Faith follows promises, does not precede them. On this principle it would be requisite to suppose that the individuals referred to first believed certain promises of God, and then, as the reward of that faith, had other and greater promises given to them. And, doubtless, cases of this kind may be found, but they would not harmonize with the other particulars mentioned in the passage, which all describe deeds, acts, blessings, deliverances, triumphs, springing out of faith reposed in some promise. To make the clause under consideration homogeneous with the rest of the passage, we must view it as meaning obtained promised blessings. And the reason why this is ranked among the triumphs of faith is, that the things promised were often such as seemed hardly within the range of probability, or even of possibility. Abraham believed the promise of a son, and his faith was rewarded with the birth of Isaac. Deliverances were promised to the children of Israel, on numerous occasions, of extraordinary difficulty, and God broke off from their neck the yoke of their oppressors. The kingdom was promised to David when he was but a shepherd boy, and he was raised in due season to the throne. Recovery was promised to Hezekiah from a mortal sickness, and he was restored to health, and had fifteen years added to his life.

\*Ἐφραξαν στόματα λεόντων—stopped the mouths of lions. The chief reference of this clause, doubtless, is to Daniel, who, when thrown into the lions' den for his refusal to abstain from praying to his God, fell down unharmed among the furious beasts. They became like lambs when he appeared among them. Their mouths were stopped and they could not touch him (Dan. vi. 17, 22, 23). Samson and David also were enabled to triumph over lions, and they may likewise have been in the apostle's view (Judg. xiv. 6; 2 Sam. xvii. 34); but his words are more exactly descriptive of the case of the prophet in Babylon. Indeed, Theodotian's rendering of Dan. vi. 22 exhibits the very same words as those

before us: My God hath sent His angel—Καὶ ἐνέπραξε τὰ στόματα τῶν λεόντων.

W. LINDSAY, D.D.

(To be continued.)

## The Preacher's Finger-Post.

### DIVINE IMMUTABILITY.

"Thou art the same."—Ps. cii. 27. THE context teaches three truths—

First: That the universe had a beginning, and is destined to have an end. "Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth," &c. "They shall perish," &c.

Secondly: That both the beginning and termination of the universe are of God. "*Thou* hast laid," &c. "As a vesture shalt *Thou* change," &c.

Thirdly: That amidst all the changes involved from the beginning to the end, God remains unalterable. "*Thou* art the same."

The close of the year powerfully reminds us of the changes of time; and it is calming and strengthening to turn our thoughts away from a changing world to an immutable God. I shall offer three remarks concerning God's unchangeableness—

I. IT IS AN UNDOUBTED FACT. When we say that He is the same, we mean the same in every respect. *His being changes not.* He is neither strengthened nor weakened

by the flight of ages and the influence of events. "He faineth not, neither is weary." *His thoughts change not.* Nothing in the eternal flow of things will ever start up to suggest new thoughts, or to modify old ones. "He is of one mind." The histories of all created existence are but His own thoughts made visible, and working out their end. *His heart changes not.* The same antipathies and sympathies "for ever." That He is thus immutable is clear—

First: *From reason.* Change in a being must occur either on account of something in himself, or of some force *external* acting upon him, or both. Men change for the two reasons. But to suppose that there is a principle in God to change Him in any respect, or any power in the universe that can in any way affect Him, is to contradict all our notions of a God. Immutability enters into the essence of our idea of Deity. Is clear—

Secondly: *From nature.* The forms of nature are constantly changing. But the *laws* that

create, modify, and destroy forms remain unchanged from age to age. Nature, that is its essence, seems immovable. Since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were. Is clear—

Thirdly: *From the Bible.* "I am the Lord, I change not." "One day with Him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." "Thou art the same." The revolutions of the heavens, the transformations of the earth, the mutations in human history, all the eternal flux and reflux in created existences, produce no change in Him. Far more unchangeable is He amidst all the changes of His universe, than the firmest rock amidst the surges of the sea, or the sun amidst all the shiftings of winds and clouds.

Another remark which I offer concerning God's unchangeableness is—

II. THAT IT IS PECULIAR TO HIMSELF. Immutability belongs to nothing else in the universe. Mutation is the law of the *material* universe, so far as its laws are concerned. Geology shows that the history of the earth is the history of revolutions. "The mountains falling come to nought," &c. Astronomy tells of planets that once shone in the heavens, that are gone, and of new ones that appear. The vegetable and animal systems of the earth are changing

every hour. Mutation is also the law of the *spiritual* universe. Human minds are constantly changing in thoughts, feelings, purposes, character. Angels changed. Some have fallen from heaven to hell. The whole universe is like a vast sea—a pulse of change throbs in every particle. Wave succeeds wave. Its motion is one eternal ebb and flow. But God sits enthroned above all these changes, more fixed than the sun above the shifting clouds, or the rock amidst the surging waters. God alone is unchangeable.

Another remark which I offer concerning God's unchangeableness is—

III. THAT IT IS A BLESSING TO THE UNIVERSE. Were God unholy, untruthful, malevolent, the universe might well pray for a change in Him. But He is eternally opposite to all this. He is infinitely holy, true, and loving, and a change in Him would be a terrible calamity. We would not have Him change. We rejoice that we can look up to Him midst all the false and morally foul and infernally malignant, and feel that there is One who is ever pure, ever true, ever merciful and good.

"Jehovah, evermore the same,  
Unchanging and unchanged art  
Thou.

And while Thy creatures wax and  
wane,

In Thee there is no ebb or flow.  
Though systems rise and fade  
away,

And nature weakens in her frame,



Thy being knows of no decay,  
For evermore THOU art the same.

Nor would we have Thee change,  
O Lord,

For kinder never couldst Thou be,  
Thy love is one great golden cord  
Binding the universe to Thee.

Ere earth was made, or time  
began,

Or Christ of human flesh became,  
Thy love went forth on guilty man;  
For evermore *Thou* art the same.

There's nought on earth that does  
not change,  
All things are shifting on the  
stream.

Whatever comes within our range  
Seems just as fleeting as a dream.  
There is no rest but in Thy WORD,  
No settled hope but in Thy name.  
Root Thou our souls in Thee, O  
LORD,  
For THOU art evermore the same."

#### THE HOLINESS OF GOD.

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."—Habak. i. 13.

THE subject of these words is the holiness of God, and we venture to predicate several things concerning it.

#### I. HIS HOLINESS IS UNIVERSALLY MANIFEST.

First: *It is manifest to man.*

(1.) In law. The principles of His moral law are holy, just, and good. (2.) In Providence. Justice is but holiness in action, and through all ages God has expressed His abhorrence of sin, in the judgments He has inflicted. (3.) In Christ. He sent His Son into the world. What for? "To put away sin." To cleanse humanity by His self-

sacrificing life. (5.) In conscience. The moral constitution of man, which recoils from the wrong and sympathizes with the right, manifests God's holiness. There is no room for man, then, to doubt God's holiness.

Secondly: *It is manifest to angels.* They live in its light. They are adorned with its beauties, they are inspired with its glories, and their anthem is, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty."

Thirdly: *It is manifest to the lost.* God's holiness flashes into hell; its action upon the consciences of the wicked creates the unquenchable fire. They are bound to exclaim, "Just and right are Thy ways, Thou King of saints."

II. HIS HOLINESS IS ETERNALLY ORIGINAL. The holiness of all holy intelligences is derived from Him. Their light is borrowed from Him, their centre. He is "the Father of lights"—the fountal source of all that is good and true throughout His creation. He derives His holiness from no one.

III. HIS HOLINESS IS GLORIOUSLY EFFULGENT. "He is glorious in holiness." He is light, in Him there is no darkness at all. "He clothes Himself with light as with a garment." "He dwells in the light which no man can approach unto." "Dark with excessive bright Thy skirts appear."

IV. HIS HOLINESS IS ABSOLUTELY STANDARD. It is that

to which the holiness of all other beings must come, and by which it must be tested. The law is, we are "to be holy as He is holy." But how can fallen man be raised to this standard of holiness? Here is the answer, and the only satisfactory answer:—"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Oh, Hely Sire, oh, Holy Sire,  
Sole Fountain of all light,  
Thyself the uncreated Fire  
Burning in every pure desire,  
The living flame of right.

Thou dwell'st in light whose daz-  
zling rays  
Enrobe Thy majesty,  
Though highest seraphs hymn Thy  
praise  
In fervid and perennial lays,  
Thy face they may not see.

Thou art the uncaused cause and  
end  
Of all save sin and woe;  
From Thee all spring, to Thee all  
tend,  
As rivers to the sea descend,  
In everlasting flow.

All sin Thou hatest, Holy Lord,  
'Tis loathsome in Thy sight,

Thou hast denounced it in Thy  
Word,  
By every soul to be abhorred  
As life's accursed blight.

"Though sin is ours, O Holy One,  
And stains us to the core,  
We praise Thee that Thy blessed  
Son,  
In mercy does for man atone  
To Thee for evermore."\*

#### SOLOMON'S DARK IDEA OF LIFE.

"That which hath been is named already, and it is known what man is: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he. Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man better? For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?"—Eccles. vi. 10-12.

From this passage we gather some of Solomon's dark ideas of life. He says in effect:—

I. FATE IS FIXED. "That which hath been." All the past, the result of a future destiny, and so shall be the future. Everything is fate. Most men feel this at times. Do you ever say, I must obey my destiny? It is no use contending with fate. Mine is an unlucky star. There is some truth in this idea. Christ taught a pre-ordination in all events. Hence we hear Him say, "The hour is come," "Your hairs are numbered," "Your names are written in heaven." But his fate was moral, not mechani-

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\* This Hymn is composed for the tune "Royal Fort," Bristol Tune Book.

cal; not a blind destiny, but a wise decree.

II. MAN IS FEEBLE. This is another idea he has. It is known what man is. "Neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he." And Christless humanity is a very feeble thing. His bodily frame is feeble. An insect's sting has been known to consign it to dissolution. Man's intellect is feeble; still the human intellect can do something great in connexion with Christ.

III. JOY IS FUTILE. "Seeing that there be many that increaseth vanity, what is man the better?" Joy is only a fresh food for life-wasting vanity, more fat kine for the lean ones to devour. What the better is man for all he has? What the better for his wealth, his reputation, his philosophy?

IV. LIFE IS FLEETING. It "is a vain life," and all its days are a shadow. A shadow is the nearest thing to annihilation. A cloud may catch the eye,

and its changing views and figures may give amusement for a few minutes—a shadow, who notes it or records it? ¶

V. THE FUTURE IS ENIGMATIC. "Who can tell what shall be after him under the sun?" Says Dr. Stewart of Moulin, "I remember an old, pious, very recluse minister, whom I used to meet once a year. He scarcely ever looked at a newspaper. When others were talking about the French revolution, he showed no concern or curiosity about it. He said he knew from the Bible how it would all end, better than the most sagacious politician—that the Lord reigns—that the earth will be filled with His glory—that the Gospel will be preached to all nations—and that all subordinate events are working out these great ends. That was enough for him, and he gave himself no concern about the news or events of the day, only saying, 'It shall be well with the righteous.'"

DR. J. HAMILTON.



INFERENCE OF IMMORTALITY.—I cannot believe that earth is man's abiding place. It can't be that our life is cast up by the ocean of eternity to float a moment upon its waves, and then sink into nothingness. Else why is it that the rainbow and clouds come over with a beauty that is not of earth, and then pass off, and leave us to muse upon their favoured loveliness? Why is it that the stars, who hold their festival around the midnight throne, are set above the grasp of our limited faculties, for ever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? And, finally, why is it that bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view and then taken from us, leaving the thousand streams of our affection to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our heart? We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread before us like islands that slumber on the ocean; and where the beings that pass before us like shadows will stay in our presence for ever.—*Bulwer*.

# Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCLXXXV.)

*Subject* : SOCIAL INJUSTICE.

"Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: for their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.—Prov. xxiii. 10, 11.

AN expression identical with the first clause of this text has recently engaged our attention.\*

In these words we have three things concerning social injustice.

I. Social injustice INDICATED.

"Remove not the old landmark," &c. What are the landmarks? The *rights* of man as man. For example—

First: Every man has a right to *personal freedom*. He has an inalienable right to the free use of his faculties and his limbs. By wrong-doing, of course, he may forfeit this right to society, but naturally it belongs to him.

Secondly: Every man has a right to the *produce of his own labour*. Whatever a man produces is his; his in a sense in which it can belong to no other. It never would have been, had he not existed and laboured. His power over it, if honestly produced, is absolute, so far as society is concerned.

Thirdly: Every man has a right to *freedom in religion*. He has a full right to form his own religious convictions, and freely to express them, so long as he does not invade the rights of others. He has a right to worship his own God in his own

way, and in his own time. These are some of his rights. They are the "landmarks" marking the field of his own prerogatives. None should touch those landmarks. Woe to those who destroy them!

In the words we have—

II. Social injustice PERPETRATED ON THE HELPLESS. "Enter not into the fields of the fatherless." How many orphans there are in the world. Children left desolate, unprotected, and unprovided for. These orphans have their rights. Sad to say, there are villains in society who perpetrate outrages on orphans. (1.) This is cowardly. (2.) This is cruel. (3.) This is common. The case of the "Oliver Twist" of Charles Dickens, though, perhaps, a little exaggerated, indicates the outrages to which helpless children are subjected even in this England of ours.

In these words we have—

III. Social injustice perpetrated on the helpless, JUDICIALLY REGARDED BY GOD. "Their redeemer is mighty: he shall plead their cause with thee." The word redeemer here means "next-of-kin," one appointed by the law of Moses to look after the concerns of his poor relations, and with whom lay the avenging of their blood in cases of cruelty. It was on this principle that Boaz called upon the next-of-kin to come forward and redeem the inheritance of Elemilech at the

\* See "HOMILIST," Editor's Series, Vol. ii., page 245.



hands of Naomi. The mighty God is the Protector of the helpless. He will plead their cause, and He will one day redress their wrongs, and punish their oppressors.

(No. CCLXXXVI.)

*Subject:* SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.

"Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.—Prov. xxiii. 12.

FREQUENTLY have we met with this counsel before, under varied forms of expression. It is undoubtedly "instruction" and "knowledge" of the highest kind that is here indicated—the knowledge that makes man wise not only for this life, but for the life to come. Why should Solomon be so earnest on this question? In other words, why should the attainment of spiritual knowledge be so strongly enforced upon man?

I. Because of its own WORTH. A knowledge of the creation, its elements, laws, objects, extent, is valuable, but a knowledge of the Creator is infinitely more valuable. The poor, illiterate man, who experimentally knows God, has a sublimer knowledge than the most enlightened sage that ever lived. "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." This knowledge not only heals the diseases, cleanses the impurities, removes the evils, crushes the enemies of the soul, but lifts it into fellowship with the great God Himself.

II. Because man is PRONE TO OVERLOOK THE IMPORTANCE of this knowledge. He is, in his ungenerate state, more desirous of obtaining any other

knowledge than this; nay, he has a repugnance to this; he does not like to retain God in his thoughts. Hence the need to him of precept upon precept and line upon line. It is sad, that that which man requires most, he cares least for, that the most priceless treasure is least valued. How wise, as well as gracious, was Christ, in instituting a Gospel ministry. What is the great work of the pulpit? To urge man to search after this knowledge. Preaching is no unnecessary service; it is the most urgent work in the world. It cannot be dispensed with.

III. Because to ATTAIN IT THERE MUST BE PERSONAL APPLICATION. "Apply thine heart unto instruction." It is a knowledge that cannot be imparted irrespective of the use of man's own faculties. He must apply persistently, earnestly, devoutly. He must "search the Scriptures," and, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, get at a right conception of the truth, and when he has got that conception he must cherish it as a principle in his life, and embody it in his conduct.

(No. CCLXXXVII.)

*Subject:* PARENTAL DISCIPLINE.

"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell."—Prov. xxiii. 13, 14.

IN these verses we have light thrown upon the question of parental discipline; a question second to none in importance; and from them we infer,

I. That parental discipline MAY SOMETIMES REQUIRE CASTIGATION. "Withhold not correction from the child; if thou beatest him with the rod," &c.



The castigation may be of different kinds:

First: *Corporal infliction.* Where reason is undeveloped, the "rod" may be literally applied. This would be the only way by which the parent could make his disapprobation felt.

Secondly: *Personal restriction.* The child may be denied that which he craves after, such as liberty, gratification of appetite, or wish. This is often more painful than physical suffering.

Thirdly: *Moral impression.* The parent may, by his admonitions and arguments, and by the expression of his feelings, deeply wound the very heart of his child. The moral rod, that makes the heart feel, the conscience smart, is far severer than the material one.

II. That the END of parental discipline SHOULD BE THE SPIRITUAL DELIVERANCE OF THE CHILD. Why should the parent inflict pain upon his offspring? Not to vent his own passion, gratify his own anger, not to make the child more thoroughly the creature of his own selfishness. Alas! how often parents inflict sufferings on their children for such miserable ends as these. No, the end should be the spiritual deliverance of the child. "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from hell." In all, the parent should strive to deliver his child from the hell of sensuality, the hell of selfishness, the hell of spiritual wickedness, from the hell of practical impiety.

(No. CCLXXXVIII.)

*Subject:* AN APPEAL OF PARENTAL PIETY.

"My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine. Yea, my

reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things. Let not thine heart envy sinners; but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off. Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way. Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags. Harken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old. Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."—Prov. xxiii. 15-23.

THESE words may be taken as expressing the appeal of pious parents to their children: and notice—

I. THE OBJECTS of the appeal.

First: That their children may be *wise*. "My son, if thine heart be wise." To be wise is to aim at the highest end, to employ the best means to accomplish that end, and to do so at the best time. The approbation of God is the best aim; Christianity is the best means; now is the best time.

Secondly: That their children may be *truthful*. "Thy lips speak right things." This means something more than veracity, which is the speaking of things true to the conceptions and feelings of the speaker; it means truthfulness in life, it means that the things spoken should be true in themselves; that is, true to eternal facts.

Thirdly: That their children may be *practically pious*. "Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long." "Fear," not servile, but filial. The fear of reverential love. "All the day long." Not occasionally, but habitually.

Fourthly: That their children may be *physically temperate*. "Be not among winebibbers, among riotous eaters of flesh." Temperance consists, not only

in the avoidance of drunkenness, but in the avoidance of gluttony as well. Physical intemperance is not only a sin against the body, but against the soul also.

Fifthly: That their children may be *filially loving*. "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, despise not thy mother when she is old." The man who has lost his love for his parents, especially for his mother, has lost the last germ of goodness; or rather lost that moral soil of nature in which alone virtue and piety can take root and grow.

Sixthly: That their children may *acquire the truth*. "Buy the truth, and sell it not." The words imply (1.) that truth is a precious thing; (2.) that truth, to be obtained, must be purchased; (3.) that truth, when once obtained, should never be parted with. Notice—

II. The ARGUMENTS of the appeal. Parents might enforce many arguments to urge their

children to follow their counsel. A few only are suggested in these words.

First: *Their own happiness*. "My son, if thine heart be wise, mine heart will rejoice; yea, my reins shall rejoice." Is it nothing to make happy the instrumental authors of our being, those who have loved us most tenderly, and served us most self-denyingly?

Secondly: *The approaching end*. "Surely there is an end." An end to domestic relations—an end to all means of improvement. Yes, there is an end, and it is not far off.

Thirdly: *Freedom from poverty*. "Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." The implication is, that where these evils are avoided, and where virtue is practised, there will be no poverty. "Godliness is profitable unto all things."

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## The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

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### TIME.

*Depredations of Time*.—"Time is the most subtle, yet the most insatiable of depredators, and, by appearing to take nothing, is permitted to take all. Nor can it be satisfied until it has stolen the world from us, and us from the world. It constantly flies, yet overcomes all things by flight: and although it is the present ally, it will be the future conqueror, of death. Time, the cradle of hope, but the grave of ambition, is the stern corrector of fools, but the

salutary counsellor of the wise, bringing all they dread to the one, and all they desire to the other; but, like Cassandra, it warns us with a voice that even the sagest discredit too long, and the silliest believe too late. Wisdom walks before it, opportunity with it, and repentance behind it. He that has made it his friend will have little to fear from his enemies—will have little to hope from his friends."—COLTON.

*Neglected Time*.—"Many sitting up long at play have to go

to bed in the dark. Life here is a play, whose bed is eternity. Let us, then, give over play before our candle is out, and we, left in darkness, have to take up our bed in hell to all eternity."—SPENCER.

*Time Never Recovered.*—"Lost wealth may be restored by industry, the wreck health regained by temperance, forgotten knowledge restored by study, alienated friendship smoothed by forgetfulness, even forfeited reputation won by penitence and virtue; but who ever looked upon his vanished hours, recalled his slighted years, stamped them with wisdom, or effaced from heaven's record the fearful blot of wasted time."—MRS. SIGOURNEY.

*Picture of Time.*—"It was wittily said, that, by some, Time was thus pictured of old: Time to come had the head of a fawning dog: time present, the head of a stirring lion; time past, the head of a biting wolf: so teaching, that though silly souls fancy still their best days are to come, yet, if they bestir not well themselves in their present ones, they will be very miserably torn and bitten in their future."—BURGESS.

"Our brains are 70-year clocks. The angel of life winds them up once for all. Then closes the cases, and gives the key into the hand of the angel of resurrection. 'Tic-tac, tic-tac!' go the wheels of thought: our will cannot stop them; madness only makes them go faster. Death alone can break into the case, and, seizing the ever-swinging pendulum, which we call the heart, silence at last the clicking of the terrible

escapement we have carried so long beneath our aching foreheads. If we could only get at them, as we lie on our pillows, and count the dead-beats of thought after thought, and image after image, jarring through the over-tired organ! Will nobody block those wheels, uncouple their pinion, cut the string which holds those weights? What a passion comes over us, sometimes for silence and rest, that this dreadful mechanism, unwinding the endless tapestry of time, embroidered with spectral figures of life and death, might have but one brief holiday!"—C. W. HOLMES.

"Consider the state of this present life—a true dream which hath only the disturbances, but never the rest of sleep. A childish sport—a toil of burthensome and ever-relapsing actions, where, for some one rose, we meet with a thousand thorns; for one ounce of honey, a ton of gall; for apparent good, real evil. The paths here to the highest honours are all ice, and often bordered only by precipices. Its felicities are floating islands, which always retire when we but offer to touch them. They are the feast of Heliogabalus, where are many invitations, many ceremonies, many compliments, many services; and at the end of all this we find a table and banquet of wax, which melts at the fire, whence we return more hungry than we came. It is the enchanted egg of Oromares, in which that impostor boasted that he had enclosed all the happiness of the world; but broken, there was found nothing but wind."

N. CAUSSIN.

## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL WORLD. Edited by JAMES COWPER GRAY. London : Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row.

BIBLE LORE. By J. COWPER GRAY. London : Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

THESE volumes are from the same author, addressed to the same class, although from different publishing houses. The first volume, the *Sunday-school World*, is an encyclopædia of facts and principles, illustrated by anecdotes, incidents, and quotations from the works of the most eminent writers on Sunday-school matters. The author has brought into the volume extracts from various English and American works bearing on the various departments of Sunday-school labour; extracts referring to the superintendent and the secretary, to the teacher, to the scholar, to the infant class, to the children's service, to the librarian, as well as to other incidental departments.

The other volume "*Bible Lore*," is of more general interest; it treats of "rare MSS. of the Bible, ancient versions of the Bible, celebrated commentaries on the Bible, famous English translations of the Bible, the Authorized Version of the Bible, historical copies and curious editions of the Bible, peculiar words and phrases of the Bible, obscure customs mentioned in the Bible, remarkable predictions in the Bible, striking coincidences in the Bible, the apocryphal books of the Bible, the literary features of the Bible, notable places mentioned in the Bible." This is a very valuable little work; it contains within a small compass what the reader would have to find out in volumes elsewhere. The information is given, not only with great condensation, but with remarkable clearness. It indicates extensive reading, considerable scholarship, and superior literary ability. All believers in the Bible, who have not an extensive library, should procure this little volume. Mr. Gray deserves the thanks of all Sunday-school teachers for the very able and extensive service which he has rendered them.

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SECULAR ANNOTATIONS ON SCRIPTURE TEXTS. By FRANCIS JACOX, B.A. London : Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

ARE there any of our readers desirous of perusing a volume of rich and

varied information, touching the most vital interests of humanity? If so, here is the book for them. The author's field of reading, as displayed in this volume, is not only marvellous in extent, but in the worth, the beauty, and almost endless variety of its productions. From this field he has culled some of the choicest things, and with remarkable adroitness has used them to illustrate important passages of Scripture. The publishers of this work should make an effort to get it into all the public libraries of England. No reading society or circulating library should be without it. It abounds with striking anecdotes, and every page flashes with genius.

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AN EXPOSITION UPON THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL TO THESSALONIANS. By JOHN JEWELL, Bishop of Salisbury. Edited by the Rev. PETER HALL, M.A. London: William Macintosh, Paternoster Row.

BISHOP JEWELL was, indeed, the brightest jewel in the theological literature of the sixteenth century. Of him the great Hooker said:—"The jewel of bishops, the worthiest divine that Christendom hath bred for some hundred years." He was, indeed, one of the greatest lights that the Reformed Church of England produced. In looking into the Exposition of his, contained in this little volume, we are really amazed at the vigour of thought and expression. There are sentences in every page that are proverbs. His knowledge of human nature is Shaksperian; nor is his fancy and aptitude of language scarcely inferior to England's renowned dramatist. The editor deserves thanks for having raised this Exposition from the tomb of forgetfulness; and, in giving it a body, in which it may do service to this and future generations.

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BAPTIST HISTORY: From the Foundation of the Christian Church to the Present Time. By J. M. CRAMP, D.D. With Introduction by the Rev. J. ANGUS, D.D. London: Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row.

THE history of a great *man* has always more charms for us than the history of a *society*, either civil or ecclesiastic. Men collectively sometimes do stupid, and often intolerant, things: and this is especially the case when the society is organized on some rite or dogma that detach them from the genuinely Catholic in religion. For this reason we don't care much for reading the history of Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Wesleyans, or even Baptists. To us the history of such communities is interesting only in the measure of the great men, men of God and truth, who appear on the page. Our opinion is, that the *sect* principle is essentially destructible, as well as destructive of some noble things; and that no sect would live long, were it not for the sustaining power which it borrows from the influence of the truly great men who from time to time appear and lend their sanction to it. Haste the day when all religious sects shall be lost in a Christianized humanity! Many noble men, men of giant intellects and heaven-born charity, appear in this volume, and the record of their utterances and deeds cannot fail to interest and to bless.



TWELVE MEDITATIONS AND TWELVE SPIRITUAL SONGS ON THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM. By JAMES PATON, B.A. London: Passmore and Albaster, 18 Paternoster Row.

THIS is one of the best books we have seen on the 23rd Psalm: it is not only learned, but devout and tender.

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A SUGGESTIVE COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT, Part I, Romans. By REV. THOMAS ROBINSON. London: R. D. Dickenson, 73 Farringdon Street.

MR. ROBINSON has followed very closely the plan of Van Doren. Though that plan is undoubtedly good, we think it capable of improvement in some important respects. We think, for example, that room should be left for a homiletic classification of the general truths of the passage explained. The author, however, seems to have done his work admirably, equal in every respect to his model. We trust that he will be encouraged to go on as he has begun; for works like these are of more value to preachers than cart-loads of elaborated sermons.

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LEAVES FROM THE TREE OF LIFE. By the Author of *Divine Communion*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

THIS little volume contains thirty-three plans of sermons. We cannot recommend them as models. They contain, however, many good suggestions on the texts discussed.

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THIS TRANSITORY LIFE. By REV. WILLIAM HUDSON. London: Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row.

AN excellent little work on the transitoriness of all human affairs. It is tender, truthful, and practical.

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BEN RHYDDING. By JAMES BAIRD, B.A. London: A. G. Dennant, 34 Southampton Street, Strand.

WE recommend heartily all persons in search of health to read this very interesting work on the Amenities, Hygiene, and Therapeutics of Ben Rhydding. We have not the slightest doubt that if men whose health is beginning to fail were to resort to Ben Rhydding, they would get more good in a month than all the doctors in London could do them at all. Read the book.

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LOVE-LAND. And other Poems concerning Love. By WADE ROBINSON. London: A. G. Dennant.

As to *Love-Land*, it contains many fine conceptions of love, poured out in rolling melodies; indeed some of the parts of this book seem to be equal to the best poetry in our language on the subject.

THE CLERICAL YEAR BOOK AND PREACHER'S ANNUAL ASSISTANT FOR 1871.\*  
 Edited by "CLERICUS." A. G. Dennant, 34 Southampton Street,  
 Strand. Price, 2s.

NEVER did clergyman have such an Annual Assistant before. Besides fifty-two extensive outlines of sermons for every Sunday in the CHRISTIAN YEAR—and these from the ablest preachers of the age—here are 365 texts, with a reference to volumes where sermons on them are to be found. In addition to this there is the calendar for the year, with interleaved diary, a list of all the religious sects in England and Wales, information concerning our universities, our colleges, our religious institutions, and a variety of other useful intelligence. It would be impossible for our clergymen and ministers to have a book by them through the year more suited to help them for their various studies for the pulpit and other labours. "Clericus" seems to have done his work admirably.

KIND WORDS TO ALL CLASSES. A MONTHLY LECTURE. By REV. ROBERT HOLMES. London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 9 Paternoster Row.

THESE "Kind Words" have strength and intelligence as well as love in them. The idea of issuing such a monthly lecture by a minister is good, but many may have the idea that are utterly incompetent for its execution. Mr. Holmes has showed himself in these lectures fully equal to the work he has undertaken; he has read his age,—what is better, he has read human souls and God's remedial revelation: he knows what men want, where the true provisions are to be found, and how best to spread them on the table before his guests. May he be abundantly encouraged in this noble effort!

THE NEW TESTAMENT, Translated from the purest Greek. By JOHN BOWES, of Dundee. Dundee: 75 High Street.

WE have not been able to compare this translation with the original, and therefore cannot pronounce upon the merits of the rendering. New versions of the New Testament, whilst they make us more satisfied with the Old, often suggest a new thought and uncover a hazy expression. We therefore rejoice in these efforts.

THE MASQUE OF SHADOWS; and other Poems. By JOHN PAYNE. London: Basil Montague Pickering, 196 Piccadilly.

WE must leave the author to explain the character of this production, which he does in verse:—

"This is the house of Dreams. Whoso is fain  
 To enter in this shadow land of mine,  
 He must forget the utter summer's shine,  
 And all the daylight ways of hand and brain.

\* We regret to find that this Annual will not be ready for general circulation until the middle of the month.

Here is the white moon ever on the wane,  
 And here the air is sad with many a sign  
 Of haunting mysteries—the golden wine  
 Of June falls never, nor the silver rain  
 Of hawthorns pallid with the joy of spring;  
 But many a mirage of pale memories  
 Veils up the sunless aisles: upon the breeze  
 A music of waste sighs doth float and sing,  
 And in the shadow of the sad flower'd trees  
 The ghosts of men's desires walk wandering."

The dreams here are, like most dreams, sometimes uninterpretable. They reveal, however, a fine creative imagination and a superior power of versification.

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THE ENTIRE EVIDENCE OF EVANGELISTS AND APOSTLES ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT. By W. GRIFFITHS. London: Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row.

"I HAVE reached," says the author in his introduction, "a settled conviction that the popular doctrine of hell is an error—that there is no more authority for it in Scripture than there is for the Romish doctrine of purgatory, or of the Pope's headship and infallibility." We have frequently directed the attention of our readers to the subject of this discussion, and, without endorsing the author's views, we heartily commend his pamphlet as a contribution throwing much light on the subject. It is decidedly the ablest treatment we have seen on the question in debate.

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THE KEEPSAKE SCRIPTURE TEXT BOOK. With a Preface by Rev. C. J. RYLE. London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co.

THIS little book contains a text, and a verse of sacred poetry for every day in the year, and also blank spaces for memoranda. It is elegantly got up, and would be a nice little gift to a friend.

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PAMPHLETS:—*The Mosaic Theory. The Bible in Unity with Science.* By T. Harriot. London: Longman and Green. This pamphlet, dedicated to Dean Stanley, on a very important subject, is not altogether what we expected. We cannot endorse all the author's views, nor can we interpret many of his utterances. We must read it again.—*A Letter to Churchmen and Dissenters. From R. G. Peter, M.A.* Cambridge: Deighton, Bell and Co. An excellent pamphlet, proposing a plan for the union of Churchmen and Dissenters. Of this plan we heartily approve, and would labour enthusiastically to effect its realization. A committee formed of a few of the leading clergymen and Nonconformist ministers, for the purpose of adopting and working it out would, we think, be most desirable.—*Symbolism.* By Henry Carpenter, B.A. London: George Philip and Son, 32 Fleet Street. An able little little work on the subject of which it treats.

# THE HOMILIST.

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